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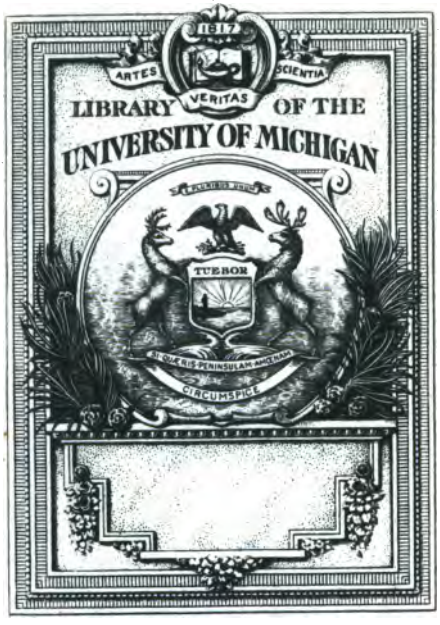

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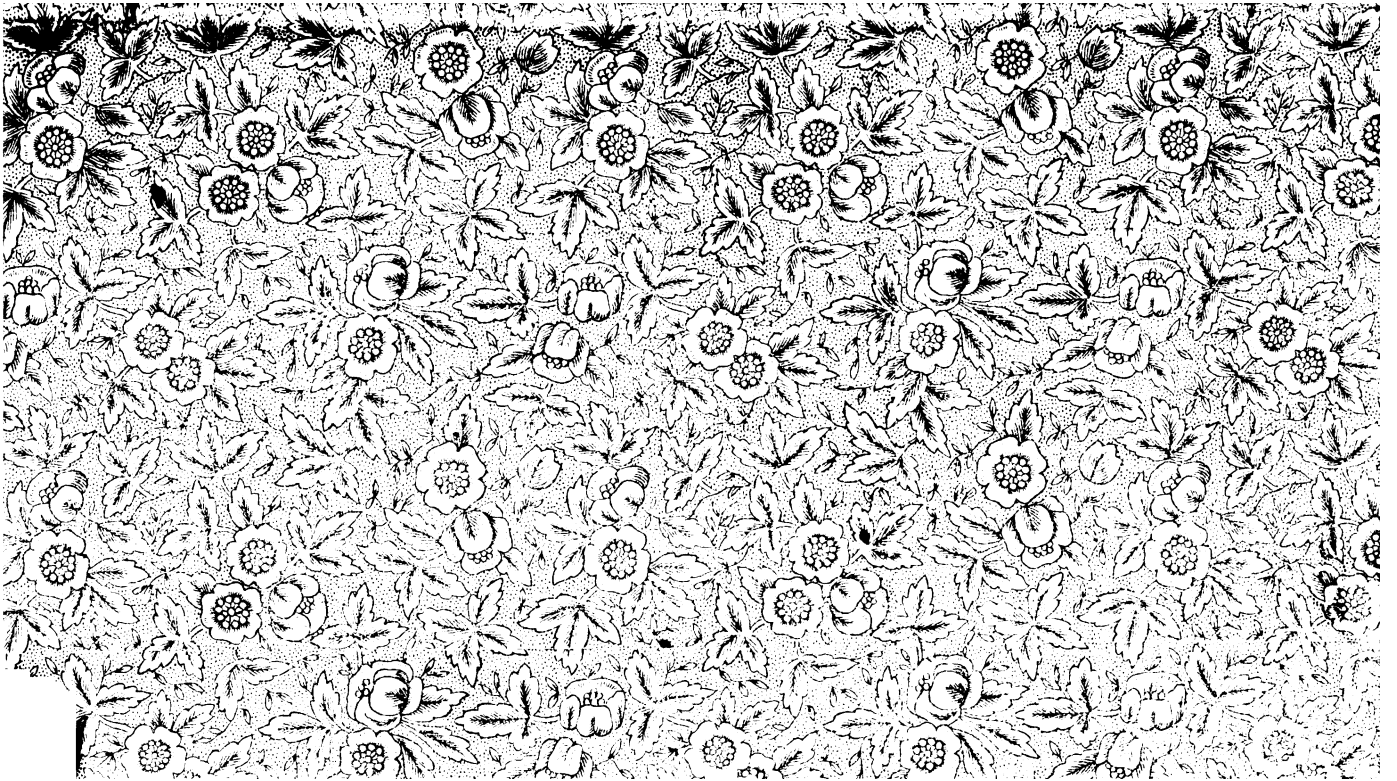

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THE

TRIUMPH OF LIFE:

A BIBLICAL STUDY OF GOD'S WAY WITH OUR RACE.

BY

REV. THOS. STOUGHTON POTWIN.

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TO THE MEMORY OF THE ENTHUSIASTIC SCHOLAR

AT WHOSE

ΛΑΜΠΑΣ I LONG AGO LIGHTED MY ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

IN THE KNOWLEDGE

WHICH I HAVE EVER SINCE VALUED

ABOVE ANY OTHER SINGLE EDUCATIONAL ACQUISITION—

TO THE MEMORY OF

MY FIRST TEACHER IN GREEK,

THE REV. CHAS. HAMMOND.

WHO HAS

PASSED BEYOND THESE SCENES

OF PAINFUL INQUIRY

TO CLEAR VISION IN EVERLASTING LIGHT,

THIS LITTLE WORK IS

MOST GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED.

11-27-33 Stud

Gift
J H Russell
7-3-33

PREFACE.

The key to the unity of theme in the following chapters will be found in an attempt to maintain the doctrine of conditional immortality, and to outline, in part, its adjustment to orthodoxy old and new.

I have made but little reference to modern writers, either those whom I oppose or those with whom I agree. This has been for the sake of brevity, and not from any affectation of independence. Indeed perhaps it is best in these days of many books to lay no claim to originality beyond the order of one's thoughts.

My Scripture citations are generally from the Revised Version.

HARTFORD, *March.* 1886

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THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE VICTORY OF DEATH.

FOR it was necessary that at first, nature should be exhibited; then after that, that what was mortal should be conquered and swallowed up by immortality, and the corruptible by incorruptibility; and that man should be made after the image and likeness of God, having received the knowledge of good and evil.

—IRENEUS, IV. 38.

IT is a just inference from the Scriptures that God made man potentially immortal in his entire nature; that is, that he made him capable of developing into an immortal life without death as we now know it, and as it happens to the brute creation. It is commonly said that death comes to man as a necessity of nature, that birth involves death, and that it must have been so from the first. And some, who wish to square this with the conditional threat of death, affirm that God, foreseeing man's sin, prepared by anticipation his death as its penalty, and do not allow any potency of physical immortality to have been in man at all. It is forgotten that in the mind of a divine Creator there must be a higher ontology than the science of animate life. And

though birth now involves death, creation does not involve death.

Man was not made a mere animal, and it is entirely conceivable and reasonable to suppose that what was added to his animal nature had power over it in connection with a constant spiritual relation of this added part to its Author, sufficient to transfigure the physical and control the unfolding of the immortal without the loathsome decay of the animal.

Indeed, take the glorious life of heaven as the goal, and take man in his primal purity, can any one doubt for a moment that had the purity remained, the love, wisdom and power of God would have found a smoother and more joyous way thither than the present? The reasonable presumption is the same as the natural inference from the Bible narrative.

The first chapters of the book of Genesis contain an ideal view of man, which covers his relation to life, to good and evil, to himself as twofold, *i. e.*, man and woman, and to the world he inhabits. This ideal view gives us truth, gives us facts, but not probably the facts of the historian, but those which lie back of history in potencies and relations.

Not all minds are equally prepared to receive and appreciate such truth, but the opening chapters of Genesis are without parallel in adaptedness to convey truth to minds according to their capacity to receive it, and to exhibit more and more truth as capacity increases.

The child and the savant in art look upon the same picture, they see the same things, and yet how differently they see, you learn from their reports of it, which may be equally true.

Genesis presents a picture drawn once for all for the whole race. All see truth in it, all may make mistakes in their understanding and reports of it.

Man's possible immortality in his whole nature is one of the things we see in it. One may pass it as a thought of little moment. But we place immeasurable importance upon the revelation of the incoming of things to our race which became permanent. The intimations also of what might have been, certainly deserve attention.

The biblical evidence of such superior possibilities in man at the outset are found, first, in the way in which his creation is distinguished from that of the brutes. While they are simply evolved by the divine Word from previous material as "Let the waters bring forth," "Let the earth bring forth," God said: "Let us make man in our image after our likeness."

We cannot affirm the limits of this likeness, but, that it should have extended to a controlling energy over the animal constitution is easy to believe; in fact, it is almost impossible not to believe it.

In the second account of the creation, Gen.

ii., the manner in which man is made a living soul marks him off from mere animal life with the same distinctness.

His life is breathed into him by the personal inspiration of God himself. This suggests a personality derived from God directly, and the inspiring breath which in God could create a personal being, it is easy to suppose, when seated in man, and retained in harmony with God, would have a vivifying, and transmuting power, able to evolve the immortal within the animal without its sudden and entire decay. We can partly illustrate this idea by the present power of mind over body, still more by the supposed results upon human life, of absolute virtue and obedience to the laws of health continued through successive generations. What our bodies are able to endure now of abuse, and what in spite of it they are able to achieve is a great marvel. Physicians affirm that the greater part of the blood of the race is tainted from alcohol or narcotics or the effects of lewdness.

And when you add the numberless violations of the laws of health in our artificial living, in labor and the pursuits of ambition and pleasure, and the results of violence between man and man, the wonder is not that life has its ills and is short, but rather that it has anything but ills.

Conceive all this reversed. Imagine that from generation to generation perfect virtue and wis-

dom should prevail in the treatment of the body, that the activities of healthful industry should be shared by all, and excesses of toil and pleasure be banished, in other words that righteousness be the absolute and joyously adopted rule of all—but you say: This is talking of something unearthly. Very true, it would be an unearthly condition of character for man, and it would just as certainly produce an unearthly condition of health and life.

Death would lose half its pains and terrors, yes, ninety-nine hundredths of them; and yet we have supposed nothing more than the effect of physiological laws. This line of thought, I say, illustrates what power the soul of man, as it came from the breath of God, might have had over the body, had it abode in God, instead of wandering into sin.

Indeed, in an ideal picture of man absolute innocence could be associated only with incorruptibility of his physical as well as his spiritual nature.

The length of life attributed to the Antediluvians shows the idea of the author of the narrative to be that death asserted its power but slowly in the first age, when the corrupting agencies had not had time to multiply and intensify.

The method of removal from earth of Enoch, Elijah and Moses must be regarded as giving perfect or partial examples of euthanasy by transformation instead of corruption, being

thus at least qualified remissions of the sentence of death.

Through Paul we have the promise that those living at the last coming of the Lord shall take on their immortality without the sleep of death. What can this be but a sudden unfolding of that which has always been germinantly in man. Were this change assured to one of us at the present day, he would no longer look upon himself as mortal in the ordinary sense. In fact, the whole doctrine of the Resurrection set forth as wrought by Christ in undoing the work of Adam, carries with it the implication that man was made with the elements of immortality in his whole being.

Above all, the transformation of Christ's body demonstrates the latent capacity of our nature when in harmonious association with God. His body saw no corruption, but was translated into the celestial body. The examples also which the lower creation shows of life rising from lower to higher grades and a new element without entire physical decay—the butterfly from the worm—are more than symbols of this change; they reveal a law of the divine working. Should He care for the worm and not for man?

This view of primitive man is as old at least as the second century, as will appear below in the quotation from Theophilus in the chapter

on the opinions of the Fathers. Augustine maintains it in many passages in his City of God, and his anti-Pelagian writings, though he seems to make the means of it objective through the tree of life. Thus, xiii, 1., he says, "He had so made them (our first parents) that if they discharged the obligations of obedience, an angelic immortality and a blessed eternity might ensue without the intervention of death."

Students of the Bible have found this view consistent with the conditional threat of death, which carried with it, of necessity, a promise of life to follow obedience.

What now took place when man sinned? It had been said to him: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Did he die in that day? We think he did. If the death of the body merely was meant, Adam had a very long reprieve. But that he regarded himself as reprieved, or that God so regarded him, we have no evidence. He certainly underwent a vast change in that day, a change that involved all the possibilities of death. He lost his oneness with the life-giving God. The spirit breathed into him of God dissevered itself from its author and had gone forth in a way of its own. The finite had let go its hold of the Infinite, and was in a way left to itself. In this was the beginning of all death. It was therefore death.

All subsequent death was but the unfolding

of that fatal change. The contagion of death once in man, it must spread through all departments of his being unless arrested. The body* was by it left to its animal properties which must wane and decay, when deprived of any sufficient antagonizing principle to exalt them; and the spirit was left to the condemning sentence of God.

Death as disseverment from God involved every possible sinking away and loss of estate, faculties, being. It was the loss of all assurance of blessing, of all hope except in some new divine word. Thus in this first encounter death was allowed by the Creator to gain a victory over his work. It has been the favorite style to go outside of Scriptural language and call it the Fall of Man. Many have also been pleased to map out this event and its consequences as a federal headship in Adam for the race.

Perhaps no harm is done by this if it be kept in mind that we are without any evidence that our first parents knew by any means that the moral condition of their descendants was made dependent upon them. But stripped of all fiction and figure, the simple truth appears that God planned this world to be a sphere in which to unfold in the creature moral freedom, and then holiness through vol-

*Hence, Augustine insists on the letter of Paul's words: "The body is *dead* because of sin," not merely mortal. De Genesi ad Litteram Lib. VI. cc, 24, 25.

untary choice and effort *after the bitter taste of evil.*

Man's first innocence was the introduction to this administration, a kind of back ground on which to work. It was never designed to be anything more. God is represented as preparing the way for the great trial by himself creating the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The divine prevision took in the result of the appointed trial. It was certain to the mind of God without being a necessity forced upon man. The narrative of Eden saves God from being the author of a race necessarily sinful, but certainly makes it a part of his plan to use sin as a stepping stone to the quality and degree of the holiness he would display in his earth-born children.

As a father places his infant of a few months upon its feet, and stepping back bids it come to him, knowing well that its first steps will not be without a fall, so God set our first parents to walk morally, knowing well that they would stumble and fall in the way, but would by his helping grace at length learn to walk uprightly. As my Baptist brother, Dr. Crane, late of Boston, has beautifully and truly said, "Man fell, but he fell into the arms of his Redeemer."

The innocence of the Garden was historic, but its import in the divine economy has often been misunderstood. Its true importance lay in the position in which it placed man in re-

gard to moral individuality and freedom, and in giving the race an ideal of its own toward which to work. God would not have man holy merely by the method of his creation, nor without some experimental knowledge of evil, but have him become so in such a way as himself to have a share in the glory of his final exaltation, and that God might add to the glory of creative power and wisdom, a glory of developing grace.

Whether or no there is a derivative relation from the brute creation in man's body, the idea of development upward from the animal to the spiritual is a notable illustration of what God is doing in this world, and of the work to which he calls all who have in any degree reached the spiritual. The reality of what is called the Fall of Man is beyond successful question; though modern science should establish all its hypotheses it could not disprove it. No mattter in this regard *how* man became man, there was a time when he first became man, a being with a rational and moral nature. There was a time when he approached his first moral action. That was a time of moral equipoise; and his first choice of the evil instead of the good, of the lower instead of the higher, was his Fall. And with the Fall was disclosed the most momentous fact that God had placed in his work, the law that like produces like for morals as well as for matter.

But the ideal remained as an ideal and has

ever remained, felt and understood dimly or clearly as men have gone on saying, "I know the better but follow the worse." This heredity of moral condition determined the generic character of the race, and revealed the designed character of God's moral administration in the world. Here occurred the great fact that Paul describes when he says, "For God hath shut up all unto disobedience that he might have mercy upon all." Romans xi: 32. Holiness thereafter was to come only through sin and grace, as much as though the race had been sinful from the beginning.

Stated abstractly and impersonally, and according to what we see around us in human kind every day, God at some time and in some way has cast into His animal mass the ferment of reason and conscience, and the opposing forces have been at work ever since; the question of result being how much of the spiritual and eternal can be sublimated and distilled.

The first sin was a surrender to the animal nature by disobedience to God, in regard to it. The animal prevailed over the spiritual, and the spiritual only remained in capacities and the reminding force of conscience. Man has remained under the power of the animal taken in the large sense, except as redeemed. See Paul's doctrine of the flesh in the Epistle to Romans. Sin has been the choice of the flesh, its self-seeking, its violence, its hates and its loves; and the dominion of death has been the

necessary result, as expressed by Paul: "If ye live after the flesh ye must die." Romans viii: 13. And death has wrought in all departments of man's nature, preparing the destruction even of *being* itself. Redemption has been the initiation of a spiritual evolution antagonizing death through the incarnation of the Word and the fostering power of the Divine Spirit.

CHAPTER II.

LIFE BY GOD REVEALED IN PROMISE.

ETERNAL life, which God, who cannot lie, promised in the beginning of the ages (pro chronōn aíoniōn). Tit. i: 2.

THE new word was not long in coming. It was symbolic, yet clearly indicated a victory over the power through which sin and death had made their first conquest, and so over sin and death themselves. The representative source of evil was cursed and doomed to a fatal crushing by a power to arise by the woman.

We also call the divine sentence upon Adam and Eve "a curse," but words of promise abound in it. We call it a sentence of death, but words of life were heard even before the woman was addressed. In the condemnation of the serpent we hear of the *seed* of the woman. Seed is not the work of death but of life. It was certain therefore before a word was uttered against our first parents that they were to live. The curse was to be suspended and the power of sin and death limited. Thus began to be exhibited the sense in which death had been threatened against them. A door of hope was opened. Death was not to utterly ruin the

whole man, was not even to be the immediate death of the body. It was to wound him to the depravation of his nature and to the initial decay of his body. But the God-inspired life was to remain in him, and the work of death was for the present to be held back from the immaterial personality. The Judge was already wearing a face of promise as he approached the woman. When the words of God reach her ears she is already suffering the death there is in disobedience; as the next degree, God unfolds before her a vision of sorrow and subordination. But the promise of life was repeated to her in the words, "Thou shalt bring forth children." And when Adam names his helpmeet, he calls her, not Death, but Living, as the mother of the living.

When the condemnation reaches Adam, his death appears in toil and sorrow to be followed by a return to the ground. But even here the sentence says nothing of the spirit. What came from the ground was to return to the ground. But Adam's inner self did not come from the ground, as Augustine* so long ago said. The Breath of God could not return to the ground. And so the door of life was still left open.

We find then these elements of promise in what was first pronounced after the Fall:

1. Death, as far as revealed objectively, is

*De Peccatorum meritis et remissione. Cap. 1.

made to be the death of the body. There was still left the wide door of hope for the soul.

2. God begins his sentence with the serpent as taking part with the woman against evil.

3. The grace of child-bearing for the life of a race.

4. This child-bearing shall bring in the conquering Seed, the Renewer of Life for the race.

5. The last verses of Gen. iii. suggest a remaining potency of immortality. Man was not to be allowed to partake of the tree of life and live forever because he had come to know good and evil, *i. e.*, evil as well as good. Surely there could have been no obstacle to his living forever if he were certain to always choose the good, but *an immortality in evil was not to be tolerated.* Thus early do we begin to find evidence that *an eternal dualism of evil with good was not the thought of God.*

Thus man's estate was changed from the possibility of a natural development into immortality, to a condition of trial in conflict with existing evil. And the trial was as to the saving the soul from the law and operation of death, which had fallen upon it in its loss of innocence, and upon the body in its subjection to the law of decay. All this may never have been revealed to our first parents in Miltonic language, but it appears in the self-revelation of God to the first patriarchs and their communion with Him. Abel made an offering to the Lord and the Lord had re-

spect to Abel and his offering. To Cain a promise of acceptance was made if he did well, otherwise Sin was lying at the door to finish its fatal work upon him. Seth and his children were inspired to initiate the worship of Jehovah. Enoch walked with God and was made an example of life restored by promise and communion with God. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and was made a preacher of righteousness and the preserver of the race. These glimpses of life with God evince that the work of grace had begun, and that it had been made known that the personal and real life of man should be secure to the worshipful and obedient.

In these gospel days, when so much is said of salvation by faith, we are in danger of forgetting that men have always been saved by faith. Faith is an obedient, confiding response to God, revealed in whatever way. There may be faith in God revealed in nature, if nature is discerned to be the expression of an individual being and will. That "the just shall live by his faith" was uttered by prophet before it was spoken by apostle. That the Patriarchs were saved by faith we have the testimony of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "These all died in faith," and "without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him." Abraham not only was saved by faith, but became according to the argument of Paul a type of believers for all time: "Who is the father

of us all;" "Nor was it reckoned for his sake alone . . . but for our sake also unto whom it shall be reckoned who believe *on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.*" Note that gospel faith is here spoken of, not as in Christ, but as in Him that raised Jesus from the dead. The identity of Christian faith and Abrahamic is thus demonstrated by carrying back our faith to Abraham's standpoint. God became to the patriarchs a revealed God. Then began men to call on the name of the Lord (Jehovah). All willing response to his word was accepted, *i. e.*, "saving faith." The difference between their faith and ours and the difference in God's manner of accepting it, was what in human relations we should call a difference of administration. As in Hebrews again, "and these all having had witness borne to them through their faith *received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.*"

In the Epistle to the Galatians Paul reasons that the Christian dispensation was brought in so that "the *blessing of Abraham* might come upon the Gentiles by Christ Jesus."

In the conversation of Christ with the Jews recorded in the eighth of John, he made two far reaching declarations respecting the relation between Abraham and himself. First: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day." We must understand more to be meant

by this joy than mere personal pleasure in being permitted to have a vision of the future. He must have rejoiced in view of the fulfillment of the promise, "In thee shall all the nations be blessed;" and according to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, he must have included himself among those who, "apart from us should not be made perfect."

These last words are the key to the relation of primitive to Christian faith.

The first faith of men was provisional and anticipatory, and did not complete its work "apart from us." That is, in some way they have at last to be consolidated with us in the salvation of the race. Their faith was not different in its potency, but differently related as between a promised and a present fulfillment of the divine covenant.

The other utterance of Christ was, "Before Abraham was I am." Now if Christ was before Abraham, with reverence be it asked, where was he, and what was he doing? John's gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews affirm that as the Logos he was the Creator of the world. If the son of God was the Creator of man, are we to suppose for a moment that he stood aside from the time that work was completed and took no care for him until he came to take flesh upon him among men?

Certainly not. He can not be supposed to have made all and upheld all by the word of his power and not to have revealed himself to

his intelligent creatures, and the revelation of God described in the Old Testament must have been by him. If we do not go so far as to identify the preëxistent Christ in every way with the Jehovah of the Old Testament, we must at least recognize him in the "voice of the Lord God walking in the garden," in the appearance of the Lord to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, to Jacob at Bethel, to Moses in the burning bush, and in the "Angel of his Presence" of Isaiah. And, indeed, how like the voice of Jesus reads Isa. xxxiii: 22: "For Jehovah is our judge. Jehovah is our lawgiver. Jehovah is our king; he will save us." That is, Jehovah has regal, legislative and judicial power over us, and *he will save* us. In a word, he who *speaks* for God in the Old Testament by angel, priest or prophet, he who *covenants* with man in behalf of God, must be held to be identical with the WORD that in fullness of time was made flesh and dwelt among men.

Hence the proper answer to the question that has been raised of late whether man can be "saved by the essential Christ, or only by knowledge of the historic Christ." The *essential* Christ is God revealed to the soul, and God thus revealed saves those to whom he reveals himself. At the same time those thus saved must also be included among those who "apart from us (believers in the historic Christ) shall not be made perfect," *i. e.*, in some way and some time they shall reach their

solidarity with the rest of their race under the historic Christ; and here perhaps is the explanation of Paul's illustration in Gal. iii between "seeds" and "seed." Instead of finding fault with Paul's linguistic argument as so many have done from Luther down, let us say rather that he is not making an argument at all, but merely intends that the form of the collective noun should *illustrate* this solidarity of all the good and all the saved in the Son of man.

The first promises to the patriarchs were therefore part of the preparatory work of Christ, the forecasting of the redemption through his incarnation, death and resurrection. But for these promises they must have expected the work of death to go on to the utter negation of all that enters into the conception of life. Our first parents had no means of knowing what death meant, except by observing the cessation of life about them and their own imagination of such cessation in themselves. The promise of eternal life, therefore, was a promise to stay the power of death and to restore from what it had already wrought. This promise was fulfilled by granting a survival to the spirit and permitting it to take on a new body in a deathless life; but only to those who embraced the new opportunity to regain their lost hold upon immortality by a new spiritual union with God. Thus the preëxistent Christ began by promise to rebuild at the foundation of the spirit, and thus early "brought life and im-

mortality to light." And henceforward death itself became a helper unto life by entering, along with pain and sickness, into the new trial as a teacher of virtue and holiness. And the grand result is carried forward and made to depend upon the final judgment of soul. The final award of death only follows the rejection of grace. For such as fail to recover themselves under this new trial of grace, death resumes its course, and is completed in the second death by the extinction of all that God put into life when he made man.

CHAPTER III.

IS LIFE INDEFEASIBLE?

THE view of Life and Death offered in the preceding chapters challenges the prevalent ideas of immortality, as also the usual understanding of many passages of Scripture. It is necessary, therefore, before we proceed farther, to consider the question of human immortality.

From as far back as we can trace the history of opinion, man has held in some form a belief in a future life. This faith cannot be said to have had the universal and intuitional character of a necessary belief, for it has been widely doubted and often denied. But it is a kind of primal judgment that springs up in man's first thinking, and, even with revelation aside, there is no reason to question that it represents the truth. But it is a great mistake *not to distinguish between a future life for the race and its immortality.* Whether we as Christians believe in the latter must depend upon our understanding of what Christ has said regarding it.

The belief in a future life was developed in the ancient pagan world, as, *e. g.*, among the Greeks, into the doctrine of the inherent

immortality of all souls—that souls must live always by the very necessity of their being. This was a part of the pagan philosophy most current in the time of the early Christians. From those times it has come down to us. We have been taught to think of man as immortal, we speak of him as immortal, most suppose that the Bible calls him immortal, though it never does, but distinctly says that "God only hath immortality." Few devout minds stop to consider whether this belief demands any qualification or even examination. The antiquity of any belief weighs heavily upon the mind. It is well nigh impossible to approach the question of any needed modification of a belief supposed to be so well settled without a prejudgment against it. Yet we know very well that human life can scarcely show any truth unmingled with error, that error becomes hoary as well as truth, that the truth of one opinion has often been taken as evidence of the truth of other related opinions which were not true.

In interpreting the revelation made by Jesus Christ we encounter a philosophy which originated with minds not enlightened by revelation, and which was but an attempt at a reading of nature. This attempt was made by some of the greatest minds the world has ever seen, and so attained to much truth, so much that it has been hastily concluded that Christ himself postulates this philosophy in what he has to

say to men. And thus pagan ideas have practically determined how revelation should be understood. This method forestals the question whether or no Jesus Christ brought any new light to mankind on this subject of the continuance of the future life. But in the presence of Christ, in the presence of Him who came from God, and himself "made everything that was made," who is Plato? Can we coolly imagine that the author of life, the appointer of all its conditions, when he came to speak of life, should have no corrections to make, no new elements to introduce in the doctrine of the brightest of human minds? Plato and Socrates themselves had no such pride in their work as to doubt this. They hoped for some word to be sent from the Deity to make known what they were merely seeking after. They looked upon "their opinions as but the dawn of a day of light which they hoped would yet arise upon the world." This is expressed in the Phædo (78 and 85) where Socrates bids his hearers to search through all Héllas and all the races of the barbarians for some one to take his place, as one to charm away the fear of death by a true philosophy; and if they are unable to *live by the aid of a divine word* (logos), then to take the best of human words. When that DIVINE WORD came, philosophy should have been silent and waited for his voice to be clearly heard.

Yet we are by no means aiming to bring into

contempt the achievements of ancient philosophy regarding man's spiritual life. It spake the noblest, truest words that minds could speak unaided by revelation. Indeed it is not necessary to believe that they had no divine aid.

In the generic, in the ideal, they reached the truth. Man is immortal. Immortality is man's normal and perfect destiny. Everything is properly characterized by what it is at its best. The fruit of a tree is described from its perfected specimens. No one stops to qualify this by reference to its windfalls. It is not necessary in common speech or thought to take aught from our crown of glory because of those who become abortive and are lost to the world and themselves.

There is good reason, however, for denying the truth of that philosophic dictum which makes man universally and necessarily immortal. And in view of the light that Jesus Christ was able to shed on all matters of the future life, it was to be expected, as I have said, that he would correct as well as add to the best of human opinions.

A comparison of Hebrew opinion with that of other nations of their time gives additional occasion to doubt that the pagan peoples had arrived at the whole truth in this matter. How happened it that God's chosen people had less light, if genuine and sufficient light it was, on this subject than other peoples? It was the

nations who were "allowed to walk in their own ways" that developed this doctrine of inherent immortality. No one claims that the Hebrew scriptures contain any such teaching; yet they have their doctrine of "eternal life" according to Christ's own testimony.

This dogma of essential immortality was not wanting to the Hebrews because they had no opportunity of accepting it from other peoples. In fact the difficulty is to account for its conspicuous absence in connection with their residence in Egypt,* and Moses' Egyptian learning. For this belief existed even more strongly among the Egyptians than the Greeks. It was at times the habit of the former to avoid the mention of death by the euphemism of "the second life." But when the Hebrews went out of Egypt we find their prophetic leader setting before them as their new national creed, not

* And yet the Egyptians also held to the extinction of the soul as the punishment of some of the wicked. Thus in their Book of Hades, Horus says: . . . Wicked ones, Ra will sacrifice you, you shall no longer be in existence, your souls shall be destroyed; they shall live no longer on account of what you have done against my father Osiris . . . Oh be no longer in existence, be destroyed.

My Kheti, great fire! . . . open thy mouth, draw wide thy jaws, launch thy flame against the enemies of my father, burn their bodies, consume their souls, by this fire from thy mouth, by this flame which is in thy belly . . . they exist no longer.

Birch's Records of the Past, Vol. x., sec. 8, C.

a doctrine of life alone, but of "life *and death.*"

With the philosophic systems of the surrounding nations affirming a future life for all, I say the thing to be accounted for is that the Hebrews were held to a restricted, and, from the point of view of their neighbors, a very imperfect belief. This is so marked that the late Dean Stanley even claimed that they had no knowledge of the immortality of the soul until they received it from the Greeks! How the Dean got along with the connection of the Israelites with the Egyptians and other nations besides the Greeks which had their doctrine of immortality, it is not easy to imagine.

If essential immortality was the true doctrine upon which the Son of God would base his revelations regarding the future of the race, why were not the people chosen and taught of God led up to this view at least as fully as the nations not chosen and taught of God? Shall we take refuge in "don't know," and never suspect that there existed a reason in the truth itself, in the fact that God's thoughts in this matter were not exactly as man's thoughts? We know in general that the Old Testament revelation was designed to lead the way to Christ and his doctrine. But instead of carefully comparing the teaching of Christ respecting eternal life with what had here preceded it, the Christian church has sought to develop it on the basis of the Greek philosophy. Plato

has dominated Christian sentiment in respect to the future life, regarded as continued existence, and to Christ men have looked only for knowledge of its joys and pains. But can any good reason be given why Christ should be interpreted according to Plato on this question of necessary life in the future?

Scholars admit that his arguments for immortality are fanciful and insufficient, that they do not constitute a proof; nor have men since been able to add to them, so that in our own times we have reached any sufficient ground of belief, demonstrative or intuitional, that man has been made in himself immortal. We do little more than repeat the old arguments and emphasize the supposed law of divine harmony in our being. Perhaps no argument produced in the Christian ages commends itself with more force than that of Origen, viz., that whatever is made in the image and shares in the nature of the Eternal God must be eternal. But all such reasoning must be subject to what Christ has revealed. I have already intimated that the general belief in the future life of the race is of immense significance and value. If there is any harmony in the constitution of our being it must represent some fact. This *sense of life* within us, often strongest when the body is weak and decaying, approaches a consciousness that we are not going to die with the body, and is really the great natural evidence of a future for us. This it is which gives power to

all arguments for immortality. But few will have the boldness to claim that this conviction demands the belief that this future existence is beyond conditions and withdrawal. This step is a non-sequitur that needs only to be pointed out to be admitted.

Let us say rather that the intuitive expectation of a life to come marks potentiality and capacity, and makes a basis for hope and faith. It prepares men to receive a promise of life, opens the way for aspiration, self-direction and spiritual duty. It prepares them, in the words of Paul, to "*seek for* glory, honor and *immortality.*" This I claim exhausts the content of our sense of life independent of the body, and all the natural, so called, proofs of immortality. The necessity of immortality, the idea that man has been so made that he cannot cease to be, cannot be proved. It is a baseless assumption. To prove it would require to prove man so far forth to be an unconditioned being—himself the absolute—placed on an equality with Deity as far as a hold upon life is concerned. But as the absolute cannot be shown at all to belong to man in his present state, there is nothing on which to base it for the future.

Let us try to imagine ourselves resolved to go forward into the future and *live* independent of conditions that may exist there. He must be a bold man who will claim that he now holds the patent of the future in his hand so firmly that even God may not deprive him of

it. We know nothing of life in this world except under divinely appointed conditions, and real contingency of continuance. Is it to be supposed that God has not appointed conditions and contingency for the future?—that we pass in this matter of continued life from the contingent to the necessary when we leave the body? I ask is it philosophical so to suppose? If not, what if the conditions there should be found to include for some the destruction of "both soul and body in hell?" What if he that gives the spirit-body should make it subject to the second death, as the natural body is to its death?

But it will be denied that the doctrine of Christ has been warped in the interpretation by the philosophy that preceded him.

It is admitted that the New Testament does not reveal in terms an immortality for all, but it has often been confidently affirmed that it reveals it indirectly by revealing an eternity of bliss or of a pain for all. This of course begs the question I discuss regarding punishment, whether it is to be eternal pain or eternal loss of being. One class of reasoners affirm that the death of the soul cannot be loss of being because man is immortal in his essence; another class, that man is proved to be immortal by the revelation of an eternity of blessedness for the righteous and of pain for the wicked.

The logical circle that is made by the two is plain enough.

What is necessary in order to arrive at the truth is to listen to Christ without any philosophical prejudice that will prevent our receiving new truth from him if it is in his words. Let us recall again the divine preëminence of Christ, the light which he as the True Light has shed upon us. Indeed what would be our confidence to-day of a future life at all, if he had not come into the world. Remember the gropings of such a mind as Cicero's. Is there not the very highest probability that he who only has "brought life and immortality to light," has done it with features that had escaped the ignorance of man? Shall we believe that the Great Teacher had reserved nothing for his revelation more fundamental than a doctrine of happiness and pain based upon the Greek philosophy of existence?

CHAPTER IV.

"LIFE" AND "DEATH" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

As I have already intimated, the meaning of these terms in the Bible has commonly been understood according to preconceived ideas of immortality. It has been understood that God had endowed man with inherent life in his soul, and that everything said of his death beyond that of the body, must be taken in some accommodated or figurative sense. Without this foundation the conception of a death of living horrors for eternity would probably never have found its way into the teachings of Christianity.

Leaving then purely human ideas aside, let us try to determine the true sense of the Scripture and see to what philosophy it points.

"Life" is used, in the Bible as elsewhere, first for the principle of sensitive and conscious being in which our peculiar existence as man originates, and upon which its continuance depends. It is thus used of the body and of the incorporeal nature and of the united nature, the composite man. Then as life is the source and condition of all enjoyment and activity, the ascent is open to the secondary and

figurative uses of the word. In this way it is used for the conditions of the most desirable life, for the life of the noblest part of man, for the ideally happy and highest developed life, and for self-sustaining and eternal life. We thus reach a climax of life in our conceptions of human existence and well-being. We need not dwell upon this, there never would have been any dispute about it, had it not been for the disagreement regarding the meaning of "death." The usage of the two can best be determined by looking at them together. For the word "life" is the key to the word "death." As we have seen already, when "die" was first uttered to human ears it could only be understood by "life," as its loss. And "death" from that day to this has never had any meaning which was not the negation or the opposite of some meaning of "life." Over against the climax of life there is an *anti-climax of death.* Beginning at the top, the highest figurative sense of life as the highest blessedness, we descend by this anti-climax to the negation of that which gave man conscious being. Beyond that death has no significance.

The traditional error has been to ignore the possibility of this last negation, and to arrange a climax of death parallel with that of life, running it on into an infinity of death in the sense of ill-being. The Bible, as I conceive, cuts off all this at a stroke by applying

"death" in a sharp antagonism to "life," and from denying by it, first, the ideal living, then descending to the denial of all living. The words for life and death have this comprehensiveness both in the Hebrew and Greek. But from the feebler light cast upon the future state in the Old Testament little is gained by attempting to argue at length from its language as to the final penalty of the sinner. It is necessary to be content with observing in what direction its language points and how it best harmonizes with what follows in the New Testament.

The Israelites were not taught, certainly, that God's disciplinary dealing with man ceased at death, and that death was the time of the final separation of the good and the evil. Their heaven was to be "gathered to their fathers," to "their people."

Too little seems to have been made of this in judging of their views of the future life, and too much of what is said of "Sheôl." "Sheôl" is rarely used in the historical books of the Old Testament, and is nowhere used of any prosaic account of ordinary death. It is used by poets and prophets to emphasize the sad or calamitous side of death, as opposed to the enjoyments and prosperity of life.

Their allusions to death, as going to Sheôl no more excluded other and happier beliefs of the future state, than does our familiar phrase "going down to the grave" exclude or interfere

with our faith in heaven. Indeed the future life of the Old Testament is related to the resurrection life of the New Testament *as generic to specific. The Jew was taught that he went to a life with his ancestors. Christ gave the world a revelation in part of the details by which the change of worlds is wrought.*

The opposite of being gathered in peace to the fathers was for a soul to be "cut off from his people." This more nearly corresponds to the sending to Gehenna in the New Testament than anything else in the Old Testament. Sins of ignorance might be forgiven, atoned for, but for "presumptuous" sins the soul was to be utterly cut off from his people with his iniquity upon him. Num. xv: 30, 31. Much has been said of the absence in the Old Testament of rewards and punishments in the future as incentives to right action in this life.

But why should God say much about the future when dealing directly with men in the present? Blessings upon obedience in the present implied the same for the future with an unchangeable God, and so of the opposite. But heaven was sufficiently revealed to them as the great assembly of the soul-land where God's chosen people were God's chosen people still. How could it have been pictured to them in any very different manner? There was no risen Christ to be the central attraction in a Christian paradise; God in his spiritual essence has

never been held up to man in way of social familiarity.

The heaven of the Jew could only be to be gathered with the God-fearing Jews who had gone before. Indeed to this day it is not uncommon to hear Christians speak, as of one of the most joyous anticipations of heaven, of being admitted to the society of "good old Abraham." We need not doubt that the God-fearing in Israel looked to the future with quite as much content as do we ourselves.

Let not the poetic conception of Sheôl mislead us in this regard. For as to their enjoyments in the future state, if Abraham in this life saw Christ's day and rejoiced, much more must he, and all his true children, have been able in the light of the spirit world to see the Christ and the coming glory of his kingdom, and seeing, have been filled with abundant joy. We must remember also that they who have passed beyond the estimate of duration by the succession of day and night, substitute a *sense of eternity* for the sense of time, and may know nothing of what seems to us a distance of the future and a long waiting.

On this back ground Genesis and the Pentateuchal law set forth a doctrine of Life and Death; and in the very first gift of life it is seen to belong to more than the bodily organism.

As the result of the divine inbreathing, man became a "living soul," more than a living being, a living person with a soul (nephesh).

Life is here attributed to the soul with the same unfigurative meaning with which it is applied to the body. This gift of life is followed by a threatening of death to ensue upon sin.

We are logically required to understand this death as the loss of this "living" of the soul, unless proof can be adduced to the contrary. I have already expressed the belief that the change that occurred upon sin is called death, or loss of living, as being the beginning of all death, as containing its fatal germs and setting in operation its first working.

Let us imagine God proceeding in the next world to execute the full death penalty upon Cain, *e. g.*, as having forfeited all right longer to enjoy the gift of conscious life received through Adam and Eve; suppose that Cain, having secured no interest in the Redeemer, which we hope however will be found not to have been true of him, should plead that the death of the body and his remorse had exhausted the meaning of the sentence, and so beg for a continuance of his wretched life. Would any answer be needed other than: "By sin you forfeited all that I gave you as life. There is nothing to stay the power of death working through to the end of all life!"

The doctrine of the law is best summarized in Deut. xxx: 15, 19, in setting before the people *good and life and evil and death.* "I have

set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, *therefore choose life.*"

No details of what death is, are supposed to be necessary in order to lead to this choice. But to imagine that life here merely means long life, and death only early or calamitous death, is to shut one's eyes to the spiritual force of the Deuteronomic law.

The remaining Old Testament writings abound in the use of "life" for the higher moral life, and spiritual enjoyment. "Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy." Ps. xvi: 11. "In his favor is life." Ps. xxx: 5. "So shall they be life unto thy soul." Prov. iii: 22. "The fear of the Lord is the fountain of life." Prov. xiv: 27.

The appropriateness of such language rests upon the basal idea of life as conscious existence, and carries that idea along with what is built upon it, *e. g.*, the fear of the Lord is not a fountain of life to any being which does not possess life in his constitution, so as to be able to exercise that fear. In other words continuance of living existence is the axial idea about which all other conceptions of life are gathered. When life is used of eternal life the idea of continued existence is not dropped out of it because of the infinitude with which it is overlaid.

So of "death;" its use for the loss of all that is good in life does not exclude its use for the loss also of continued personal existence.

The most instructive passage regarding this matter in the prophetic Scriptures is Eze. xviii: and we can imagine to ourselves what impressions a serious minded Israelite would derive from it. Here are depicted quite fully lives of holiness and of sin, and the rewards of the one and the penalties of the other are all comprehended in "live" and "die."

And not to dispute whether soul (nephesh) is here used independently of the body, there is no doubt as to the emphasis placed upon the inner personality of the man, in the solemn way in which it is arranged in the presence of God. "*Behold, all souls are mine;* as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the Son is mine, the soul that sinneth it shall die." Suppose a hearer of that ancient day should have thoughtfully asked himself, "What is it that as a sinner I am in danger of in this death? I know what life is; it is to go on and on with this inner self which I now am, and when this going on is promised *as the greatest blessing* Jehovah can bestow as a reward for obedience, I know it means the highest possible well-being and happiness. But what is this 'death'?

"Of course it means the loss of the blessing there is in the happiness of life, but is this all? Life was a beginning, is not death an end?"

And there he was left to stand in the dark shadow of an all-embracing, fathomless negation, *Death.*

CHAPTER V.

"LIFE" AND "DEATH" IN THE EPISTLES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WHEN we come to the New Testament we naturally find a more varied use of both terms, "life" and "death." The revelation of spiritual truth and future life by our Lord, and the higher fields of thought traversed by the New Testament writers carry these words into a wider range of ideas and speech. For "life" two words are used within the scope of this discussion, of similar physical origin in their probable etymologies, but taking somewhat different directions. "Psuchee" is life as closely connected with spiritual personality. "Zōee" is life as associated with the conscious activities and enjoyment of a living being. But the chief difference in the New Testament usage of "life" which requires notice is its use for the state into which man is lifted by the power of the Holy Spirit. This renewed condition is called life *par excellence*, as being the highest development of life in its highest features. It is the ideal life in which communion with God is restored, and the power of reunion with God for the whole being of man begins to be exemplified. And

the absence of this condition with its holy activities is by comparison called "death," and in the same sense in which its presence is called "life."

The want of this life is a part of the work of sin, and the man is "dead in trespasses and sins." But here again we shall find that it does not follow that this is the whole of death which "sin when it is full-grown bringeth forth," Jas. i: 15. The sinner who is going on in his disobedience comes more and more under the power of death; one feature after another of the God-given life disappears. He is under the *law* of sin and death, and, if he persists, this divinely fixed law will do its full work upon him. It is not necessary before we can believe this that we should know precisely *how* this law works. The giver of life only knows how it can be withdrawn in its departments beyond human observation, whether by some process of natural operation or by more direct infliction.

In order to proceed step by step from the generic to the more specific, I shall first examine in the New Testament the epistles, and then in a subsequent chapter the words of our Lord, adding a consideration of some passages in the Revelation.

I shall also look at the meaning of "destroy" and "destruction," as illustrating the meaning of "death."

Paul uses "death" in a variety of contrast

to his use of "life;" *e. g.*, for the occasion of death, Rom. vii: 13: "Did then that which is good become death unto me;" and for moral degradation as leading to death: "For the mind of the flesh is death," viii: 6.

But he employs it distinctly for the divine penalty upon the sinner in such passages as Rom. i: 32: "Knowing the ordinance of God that they which practice such things are worthy of death." Here is that breadth and emphasis of which we have already spoken. None of the partial or secondary senses in which Paul uses it can be substituted here. If any one claims Rom. viii: 6 given above, as a *definition* of death, let him combine the two verses and read: They that practice such things are worthy of the mind of the flesh; or are worthy of moral degradation with its inevitable pains. Moral degradation they already have; what the penalty is we find in viii: 13: "For if ye live after the flesh ye must die;" not if ye live after the flesh ye must be sinful and remorseful forever. Sinful they were already, and remorse has not the logical relation to the nature of flesh which Paul is bringing out here. Flesh dies, we know what that is, and he emphasizes the connection of death with flesh to call up the like fate of those who identify themselves with the flesh. Their whole being shall go as flesh goes. It will be objected: By flesh Paul does not mean the animal nature alone, but the dis-

obedient heart. But as he includes all under the figure of the flesh, he makes the dissolution of the flesh to figure the fate of the heart left to its bondage. Nothing can be found in the language of Paul to indicate any limit to his idea of "death" when thus used, anything which holds it back from the destruction of the soul's being.* He employs it in the same sense in Rom. vi: 21: "For the end of those things is death;" vi: 23: "For the wages of sin is death;" and vii: 5: "Sinful passions . . . wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death;" not unto remorse, for to the Corinthians he says (II. vii: 10): "The sorrow of the world," *i. e.*, remorse, "*worketh death,*" not *is death,* but goes on to work out a real death. Paul means to put into the word death here all that it can convey to express the final judgment of God against sinners. If the annulling of everything there is to life is conceivable, Paul's words certainly suggest it in these passages.

In that notable passage, I. Cor. xv: 20-28, Paul declares Christ to be the abolisher of

* One cannot refrain from quoting the words of Augustine, though he would have protested against the sense in which I use them:

What else does this mean but this: If ye live the way of death ye shall wholly die; but if by living the way of life ye mortify and slay death, ye shall wholly live?—De peccatorum meritis et remissione, B. 12 1. cap. 1.

death. Of the grand solidarity of glorious life of which he gives us here a glimpse as the completed redemption of our race, I shall speak farther on. I only wish to say here that "the end" in v: 24, must be something more than merely the resurrection of the unjust, as Meyer would make it. That the apostle should so exult simply over the resurrection of the wicked and their condemnation to an eternal conscious death, as a grand consummation in the abolition of death, is quite incredible.

This is so, whether we understand or not, that this "end" is preceded by redemptive agencies after the "coming" of Christ and the resurrection of "them that are Christ's."

In some way, Paul means, death in its farthest reach is annulled. There are two ways conceivable—one, that every soul of the race be restored to righteousness as well as every body raised; the other, that death be allowed no new victims, and no longer any "rule, authority or power." The former I cannot find as the doctrine of Paul, nor of any part of the New Testament. The latter is a part of that *triumph of life* to which the apostle points us. For in this "end" he shall have abolished *all rule,* even the rule of death. Death is among the *all things* subjected. The pointing of the text of Westcott and Hort between verses 26 and 27, which brings this out so clearly, will probably be assented to by all.

But according to the common view even the "sting of death," sin, is to remain and rule forever.

Death for the soul is the great enemy, the great "power" of the devil that Christ came to destroy. And when "*all things* are put in subjection under his feet," there can be no death regnant over the souls of men. It will before then have finished its work upon the guilty and been forever debarred from the righteous.

But it will be objected that in II. Tim. i: 10, Christ is said to have abolished death simply by the gospel and in bringing life and incorruption to light. True, but Paul is not speaking exhaustively here, as he visibly is in the passage I have been looking at. It was a great undoing of death to offer men an escape from it by faith in Christ. But that was not the completed work Paul was speaking of to the Corinthians.

But it may be said: Paul uses "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" as equivalent to death and explanatory of it. Yet this is so plain an instance of using the attendant circumstances, the means or method of reaching the end, in the place of the end itself, that it would seem attention only needs to be recalled to it to prevent mistake. Certainly the death of the wicked will be compassed through the displeasure of God, and will be a doom of tribulation and anguish.

But Paul does use certain other words as essentially equivalent to "die" and "death," viz., "perish," "destroy" and "destruction," three words of the same root in the Greek, a verb and two nouns. In determining the meaning of these words, the real question is of their reach and emphasis. Or it may be said to lie between the generic and specific. They are used both of this life and of the future. They are used of physical death or dispersion, of moral ruin, and of the infliction of the final penalty upon the sinner.

If the apostle means to employ them in the widest, loosest sense possible, then they mean merely the loss of all normal conditions and faculties. But they are adapted to convey a much more specific and intensive sense. And if any would hold them back from such sense the burden of proof is with them. I believe that Paul and the authors of the other epistles have an idea more definite and of narrower extent which they wish to express.

And if we seek this more specific and positive idea, we certainly cannot find it in eternal conscious pain, for the writers of the epistles nowhere else give intimation that they ever entertained this conception; and "destroy" and "destruction" are not adapted to convey specifically this notion. But they are adapted to convey the idea of the utter loss or extinguishment of being. And when you emphasize them and press them to

their full import, they of necessity yield this sense.

And Christ himself leads the way to this emphasis and special force when he bids us fear Him who is able to "*destroy*" both soul and body in hell. The destruction of *body* we understand, and he requires us to apply an analogous idea to the soul as its destruction.

And the association by the writers of the epistles, of "destruction" with "death" as the future penalty points also to this special sense. Paul says impenitent sinners are worthy of *death,* and are doomed to *destruction.* These words, under the physical images familiar to every mind, point together to an utter end, brought about through processes we know not how painful or how prolonged, except that it shall be relatively by few or many stripes according to the ill deserts of the individual. "Destruction" is used of an infliction as punishment at a definite time, in II. Thess. i: 9: "Who shall suffer punishment; even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might *when* he shall come," etc. These words certainly convey some other idea than that of banishment and fixity in sin and remorse. In Rom. ix: 22 Paul speaks of a class as fitted for destruction; but if destruction in the future is substantially the same as takes place morally here, these persons were already destroyed instead of merely getting ready for their ultimate doom.

In Phil. iii: 19 he says that the *end* of the enemies of the Cross is perdition, *i. e.*, destruction, apōleia; and shall we make of this "end" a *beginning*, and a beginning of an *eternal* state of spiritual wretchedness? On the contrary, the very next sentence is evidence that his thought is the same as when he says, "if ye live after the flesh ye must die:" "Whose end is perdition, whose God is their belly," if they worship the belly they must be destroyed as the belly is.

In Gal. vi: 8 Paul puts the same thought in still another form: "For he that soweth unto his own flesh, shall of the flesh reap *corruption.*" And the Greek for corruption here is from the root from which "incorruptibility" is formed, which is the only human immortality known to the New Testament.

Those who reap corruption, therefore, reap the opposite of immortality. This same thought and peculiarity of language is brought out still more emphatically in II. Pet. ii: 12: "But these as creatures without reason, born mere animals to be taken and *destroyed,* shall in their *destroying* surely be *destroyed.*"

One of the clearest instances of the use of "perish" in the complete objective sense is in I. Cor. xv: 18: "Then they also which have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." Of course it is easy to say carelessly that Paul meant that if Christ did not rise men have no Saviour, and as the living are left in sin so the

dead are suffering the penalty of the divine law. But when one looks more carefully he sees that this cannot have been his idea. Paul was speaking of those who were "in Christ," who had died in faith. He cannot have imagined that such had fallen into moral ruin and become the victims of their own remorse and of God's judgment. Neither could he mean that they are in Gehenna, as Meyer would have it, for pious hearts take their heaven with them, and the New Testament nowhere represents men as sent to Gehenna at death, only after the judgment. And who was to execute any judgment if Christ was dead, as Festus affirmed? For Christ himself had declared that all judgment had been committed to the Son. And if you fall back upon the Old Testament sentence upon sinners, that certainly was simply *death.*

Paul as a Christian had no belief in a future state that was not based upon the resurrection of Christ, and he could not imagine a future doom of misery for his departed *brethren and sisters.* If one says that Paul, by the words: "ye are yet in your sins," leaves the living in misery and so why not the dead, I reply: The misery of sin is an objective fact whether there be a God or no, but the misery of sin here is no evidence of a future life, but rather, taken by itself, that our life is decaying and self-destructive, and to perish is certainly

the most natural outcome of sin with no redemptive agency to withstand it.

No, Paul knows no future for believers but being "clothed upon" with that life of which the resurrection of Christ was the pledge; even as Christ said: "Because I live ye shall live also." If therefore we would give any specific sense to Paul's language we must understand him, that if the resurrection is given up then literally everything future goes with it, and "perish" means utter blotting out, ceasing to be. Thus "destruction" as well as "death" when used by Paul in its fullest sense covers the sphere of conscious being.

James and John also speak of death as a final event distinguished from an abnormal life: "And sin when it is *full-grown* bringeth forth death," Jas. i: 15. "He which converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death." His use of *psuchee* here is most suggestive. He is not content to say: He that converteth a sinner shall save him from death, but he that converteth a sinner shall save *psuchee, a life,* from *death.*

John shows strikingly the two senses of death. In iii: 14 he says, "We know that we have pasesd out of death into life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death." Here the unnatural state of sin is termed death, and is fitly so termed here and elsewhere for what it is in itself, and because it leads to the completed death. But

in I. v: 16-17 sin is no longer spoken of as death, but as bringing to death as a result: "There is a sin unto death . . . and there is a sin not unto death." To conceive of death here as but confirmed and remorseful sin is certainly most unwarranted.

In short, we conclude that although the authors of the epistles show the influence of the manner of the Old Testament in speaking of the fate of the wicked, and maintain something of reserve in respect to their future, yet their use of "death" and "destruction" is best understood as reaching to the extinction of personality. This conclusion we shall find to be more than confirmed by the words and symbolism employed by our Lord, in the gospels and the Revelation.

CHAPTER VI.

"LIFE" AND "DEATH" IN THE GOSPELS AND REVELATION.

LISTENING to "Life" at the mouth of Christ, is as when awakened by the dawn one stands and gazes upon the summer sunrise. There was light before, but now there is light upon light, a glorious shining that covers and fills all things. For "in Him was Life and the Life was the Light of men." The richness of the conception of life in the gospels, especially that of John, beggars description by uninspired pens and seems to deprecate analysis as rude dissection. "Life" is seized upon to convey to us an idea of that consummation of our being which shall include every blessedness that God can bestow, and the assurance that such blessedness shall never fail. Life here as the natural beginning and condition of all life, and as the door to all we know of happiness now, is made the sign by which to open to our knowledge all possible bliss in life with God in the future.

Practically the meaning of "life" from the lips of Jesus Christ is plain to all. It conveys all possible fullness both of literal and meta-

phorical sense. Yet when in theoretical discussion it is asked what does Christ mean by "eternal life," some answer that life here does not signify continued existence, but blessedness. This is to say that the whole does not contain all its parts, that the qualities and activities of being nullify being itself, or at least that the idea of being is ignored in magnifying the blossoming and fruitage of that being under the bright shining of the sun of righteousness upon it.

Dip a skeleton crown in a crystalizing fluid, you withdraw it a sparkling thing of beauty, call it a crown of life. Will you say it does not *include* the framework upon which the crystals have gathered. So does eternal life include continued existence, always postulates it, no promise of life can have any meaning without it. The emphasis which belongs to the future as the real life causes a passing over of the present and a speaking of the future as if it were something different. And indeed it is different in that which is added to the present, as the crown of crystals is very different from the frame of wire or thread. Thus Christ says: "It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye," etc., but this style of speaking does not break the connection between this life and its on-going as continued existence. So again when he says: "And this is eternal life, that they should know Thee the only true God and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus

Christ," he does not cut out the blessing of continued existence from the grand whole of blessed Being in the future. There would have been no discussion of this point, as I have said before, had it not been for the hesitation to apply a consistent interpretation to the antithetical term "death." But as the whole of life must include all its parts, so the parts of death, to reverse the figure, cannot *exclude* the whole, unless it proved that as a whole it cannot take place. In other words, the metaphorical use of "death" as applied to the soul cannot be cited as evidence that it is not also applied to it literally in other cases, unless it is proved that it is impossible to associate death literally with the soul. That it is not impossible we have endeavored to show in what has preceded, and shall offer more evidence as we go on.

But Christ says little about death, so little that one is reminded of his words: "For I came not to judge the world but to save the world." Only twice does he use the word when not speaking of the body. Jn. v: 12. "He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me . . . hath passed out of death into life." Jn. viii: 51. "If a man keeps my word he shall never see death."

In the first passage all admit that "death" means more than liability to the death of the body or liability to loss of being. It pictures first the moral state of which death in every

form is the resulting penalty. It includes a condition of degradation, condemnation and liability to penalty, from all of which there is an escape by union to Christ. But it does not *exclude* the idea that that penalty extends even to the utter loss of being.

Let any one who does not believe this last, make the supposition for the moment that it is true, would the words "*hath passed out of death*" lose any of their meaning or emphasis? Would they not rather gain an added force of comprehensiveness and of true antithesis to "life." Christ thus declares that by faith in him, the second Adam, the life-giving spirit, man passes clean out from under the curse as pronounced in Eden—returns into the realm of life as if there had been no death. Of this deliverance, justification to which some would perhaps limit the passage, is but one incident. He that passes out of death in trespasses and sin passes into righteousness, but not necessarily into life; but as by union with a risen Christ, man passes into a vital communion of life, so he leaves behind more than moral corruption and condemnation, viz., a fatal contagion of death working to the very loss of existence.

In the second passage Christ's language was so highly figurative from the point of view of his hearers, that the Jews said, "now we *know* that thou hast a devil."

But we at this day ought not to stumble at

it, or fail to reach the fullness of its content. From the height from which Christ speaks, all thought of the body disappears, "all live unto him." With resurrection, life for the body, and eternal life for the soul, or rather with eternal life for the whole exalted being of the believer—in this glorious vista of life, the momentary pangs of physical death are overlooked. There is no death for the believer which for the moment seems to Christ worthy of mention.

But one might almost as well limit the sense of death here to physical dissolution and stumble with the Jews, as to limit it to mere condemnation. Christ could not have meant a death in trespasses and sin, for as unbelievers they were "condemned already." In Jesus' higher realms of thought, his words become the *most literal truth.* The believer never shall see the real death that impends over the sinner, and is inflicted at the last by Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in Gehenna.

This is one of the Lord's glorious utterances in which he "brought life and immortality to light." The great thought is the promise of *immortality through Christ.* It is not a judicial idea as of justification, nor is it sanctification as opposed to sinfulness, but LIFE BY CHRIST; and so the half astounded, half angry Jews reply, "Whom makest thou thyself."

The same is the lesson of Christ's words to

Martha (Jn. xi: 25), as appears plainly enough in the revised version, if one keep in mind that "live" and "liveth" in the consecutive clauses should be referred to the same life, *i., e.*, the life after death of the body. The whole then becomes a promise that the believer in Christ shall after death continue to live, and that this life shall never cease. Therefore the attendant implication is that the life of one who never arrives at faith *shall cease.*

I anticipate also here, and say that this life *immediately after death* is made by Christ to be resurrection life, by the way in which he bases the promise on the fact that he is the "resurrection."

Christ once uses the adjective "dead" of a spiritual state in a rhetorical antithesis: "Let the dead bury their dead," Matt. viii: 32. But as I have said repeatedly before, such a use of "dead" and "death" does not rob the words of their primitive and natural sense when the connection calls for this sense.

In Matt. x: 28, though Christ does not use the word "death," yet his use of the word "destroy" is equivalent to "cause to die," as is seen from its connection with the preceding word, "kill:" "And be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." This is certainly equal to saying: Fear him which is able to *kill* both soul and body in hell. And what is it to

kill the soul in hell? Is it to keep it ever alive there that it may suffer eternally? It is safe to say that the idea never would have occurred to any one if it had not been for that other idea that a soul cannot be killed because of its inherent immortality. But Christ speaks here of one who is *able* to kill the soul, viz., of Him who made the soul. Christ throws this out as a warning and an intimation, and it is sufficiently significant.

For farther words of our Lord relating to "Life" and "Death" we turn on to "the Revelation of Jesus Christ which . . . . he sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John." Here again we find the Lord making use of the human instinct which associates present happiness with life and future happiness with continuance of life. And the promised blessing is figured by "tree of *life,*" "the crown of *life,*" "the water of *life,*" and "the book of *life.*" Especially significant is what is said of the tree of life; as ii: 7: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God." Here is a manifest reference to the exclusion of our first parents from the tree of life in Eden, the symbol of immortality. The second Adam now offers new access to that tree to such as lay hold upon him and overcome. This again is *immortality by Christ.* To him *will I give* to eat of the tree of life. Christ thus restores men to the ideal immortality of the first inno-

cence, and makes it actual under spiritual conditions.

The reverse of this picture the "Son of Man" introduces in the first chapter with the words: I have the keys of Death and of Hades. He reveals the fact that there is a *second* death—a death to follow the judgment, of those who proved to be incorrigible sinners. He gives toward the close of the visions given to John a revelation of what this death is. He does not trust to abstract colorless language, but as if to make mistake impossible, he gives a symbolic picture of it. He causes his servant to see a lake of fire: "And if any was not found written in the book of life he was cast into the lake of fire." We have here a symbol of sudden and utter destruction, and nothing more. And yet it has been held by many, and for long, that it is a symbol of torment. But any true development of symbolism fails entirely to show the least ground for this idea. It never could have occurred to any one were it not for the antecedent idea that souls are necessarily indestructible. The argument has been that living beings which cannot die cast into fire are necessarily represented to be in eternal torment. This denies the true symbolism by disputing the possibility of the thing symbolized. But who knows better than the author of the vision?

If indeed those cast into the fire are to be regarded as imperishable, then according to the

law of symbolism to which I have called attention in another chapter, the fire has become a symbol of purification. But I reject this idea, as there is no sign of any emerging from that lake into a new and pure life. The casting into the fire closes the scene of judgment for human offenders. The change of the picture in the case of certain symbolical beings I speak of in its place. The great contrast of human fate in the book of Revelation is between the BOOK OF LIFE and the LAKE OF FIRE. Fire is the great antagonist of life, and, symbolically, its great antithesis.

CHAPTER VII.

LIFE BY GOD REVEALED IN HUMANITY.

"THE law of the Spirit, of life in Christ Jesus." —Rom. viii: 2.

"Our Saviour Christ Jesus who abolished death." —II. Tim. i: 10.

"God himself being manifested in human form for the renewal of eternal life."—Ignatius to Ephesians, cap. 19.

"Thou art the antidote of our mortality and the resurrection of our entire frame."—Liturgy of the Holy Apostles.

"ABOLISHED death!" What words to resound along the ages of our death-enslaved world. It would seem that they can have been but rarely understood, or the tide of joy and the songs of victory would have risen higher among the sons of men. But the words stand as plain and as true as any of the good tidings divinely sent to men. Christ hath abolished death by bringing in life anew and making it immortal. The work was begun in the first promise in Eden and its completion is declared to be his last victory won for our race: "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death." With the utter abolition of death, with the vanishing of the last fear and idea of death, with the cast-

ing of death by personification into the lake of fire, is ended Christ's redemptive work, "Then cometh the end when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father."

But how? How has he saved man from death, in all its contagion penetrating to the deepest recesses of life? By the law of the spirit of life in Himself. What is this law? The gospel is the divine plan for our reinvestiture with life. It includes the divine methods or self-imposed conditions of bestowing life and the divinely appointed methods of receiving it. As life was lost by sin it must certainly be *regained through righteousness.* Even divine grace cannot reinstate us without it. "That as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life." Romans v: 21. To save man in his sin, to give life to sin, never entered the mind of God. "The spirit of life in Christ Jesus" must in some way be a spirit of righteousness. Our offences are in the way of our life. Therefore "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii: 16.

And he was "delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification" (dikaiōsis, *i. e.*, making us righteous), Romans iv: 25. Here was the incarnation of divine-human righteousness in and for the race. Here God fully revealed his great purpose and work of

carrying on his creation begun in Eden by lifting it up into a life spiritual and immortal. In his Son "was life, and the life was the light of men," not that the incarnation was a realistic infusion of life into the race. Then it must have been written: In him was life and the life was the *life* of men.

But no, it is written so as to point out that this life is appropriated by the perception and reception of the individual soul: "The life was the *light* of men." Had Adam never sinned an incarnation may have been needed and granted to lead him the upward shining way unto perfected life, but not such an incarnation in its relations and incidents. Death in man must be cured by the death of one greater than man, that "through death he might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Then there would be hope for a newly implanted life. The Son was delivered up to an incarnation of humiliation. Death had entered by a severing of man from God; man lost his hold upon the Ever-living One, the source of life. There could be no real, self-sustaining, no eternal life, unless a reunion be effected of man to God. To achieve this God must come down to man. Man cannot climb up to establish it himself, even if the longing for it remained; but alas, the loss of love for this union is the most direful part of the sundering.

And so the Son "verily not of angels doth

he take hold, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham," . . . that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

Behold then life once more united to our race, the creative, indestructible, eternal life interwoven by the divine hand with the body, mind and soul of man.

This was God's first step. He drew near and cast *life* anew into the nature of man. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father." But to the men of his generation the glory was veiled. And he "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." He was delivered up to suffering and to death. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea the death of the cross." This adding of humiliation, suffering and death to incarnation explains the "law of the spirit of life" that we are studying.

Had the law been merely that of a magical engrafting of life by the touch of deity to our nature, no suffering, no death would have been necessary. But as life could only reign again *by righteousness*, a way, *the means* of righteousness must be provided.

To do this the soul must be reached and drawn out toward God. Christ did this by making himself that which was typified by the

Jewish sacrifice. Sacrifice was a machinery of worship, an acting of worship through which the heart could ascend and fix itself upon God. Sacrifice is not to be explained by theological views of Christ, but Christ was explained to the world in advance by sacrifice. Yet it was not the typical character of sacrifice that made its value to the ordinary Jewish worshipper. It was complete in itself to him as the vehicle of his piety toward God. When the sinner brought his sin offering, laid his hand on the head of the bullock or kid, slew it and gave it to the priest with which to make atonement for him with the sprinkled blood and the savor of burned fat, he, if a true heart, worshipped in holy obedience, and accepted forgiveness as promised him. He had confessed his guilt and desired forgiveness; the bringing of the offering did that. His hand upon the head of the victim made it to represent himself. The slaying of the victim was an acknowledgement of his own ill desert, of the fact that sin merits death. The blood before the Lord and the savory incense meant consecration to God. That upon these rites the man was forgiven was no necessary result, but merely God's free and gracious gift. He had then *a righteousness* which God had offered to accept. Christ made himself the way of the world's righteousness which had been shadowed forth in these sacrifices, "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin (sin offering) on our behalf,

that we might become the righteousness of God in him." "For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." "But now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

The divine sacrifice instead of a new victim for each sinner and each sin was made *representative* for all who would avail themselves of it: "Because we thus judge *that one died for all, therefore all died.*" II. Cor. v: 14, 15. Not, one died instead of all, and so all did not have to die, by a law of substitution, but all *did die* in the death of Christ allowed by God to be representative. And it becomes representative when embraced by the faith that thereby confesses sin and desert of death. "We behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God *he should taste death for every man,*" Heb. ii: 9. Here is vicariousness in death, *not vicarious penalty,* for what is penalty for the sinner is but pain for Jesus, but benevolent representative death.

This is part of God's thoughts for our race, the full sum of which no man doubtless can fully fathom.

But the record stands: that *in behalf of*—(Greek, huper) every man Christ should taste death. And thus it is that Christ is said to be a curse for us. "Cursed is every one that hang-

eth on a tree," when applied to Christ utters his humiliation in his work in our behalf, not penalty, but chosen self-humiliation.

As Justin Martyr said so long ago: "For the statement in the law, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,' confirms our hope which depends on the crucified Christ, not because He who has been crucified was *cursed by God*, but because God foretold that which would be done by you all." Seediac Trypho, c. 96.

God's next step in bringing in life and salvation for us was to offer in his Son a *representative righteousness* to be embraced by our faith.

The pious Jew had been permitted to present a righteousness by a sacrificial faith in the place of the real righteouness by faith of the Christian ages.

This righteousness by faith in the world's great sacrifice is the "something better concerning us that God has provided." This righteousness of the Son was not alone his divine holiness when preëxistent in the bosom of the Father, but human righteousness perfected in obedience and tested by suffering, even the extreme of fatal suffering on the cross.

This righteousness has been offered to our hands. Herein is the excellence of "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Bulls and goats had no righteousness that could be grasped by the hand of faith, and so "their blood could not take away sin."

Bulls and goats were not the Living One, union with whom could impart life.

But the Christ, the world's great sacrifice, was both incarnate righteousness and incarnate life.

Here is vicariousness of righteousness, righteousness offered to the embrace of the soul by faith.

Faith presents our confession, our penitence, our acknowledgement of the desert of death, our prayer for forgiveness. Our love seizes upon his perfect obedience and declares: *Would that it had mine;* makes it ours by the *will for the deed,* as the inspired Watts sang long ago:

> "My faith would lay her hand
> On that dear head of thine,
> While like a penitent I stand
> And there confess my sin."

Here is justification unto life: "Even so through one act of righteousness (better, life of righteousness) the free gift came unto all men to justification of life."

"Even so through the obedience of One shall the many be made righteous." Rom. v: 18, 19.

Here is the vicariousness of Him who, after suffering to rescue, provides his own garment to cover, his own pledge to sustain. Here is objective righteousness and our subjective faith laying hold of it—*both essential to our justification and life.* "That God might himself be

just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." Rom. iii: 25, 26.

The being "*just* and the *justifier* of him that hath faith in Jesus" is the passage oftenest recurred to by disputants on the doctrine of atonement. Many make "his blood" the leading idea of the passage. I regard this as a mistake. The leading idea is "faith," "faith in Jesus." The "blood," or death represented by it, is subordinate as that which *presents Jesus to the acceptance of human faith,* and the faith lays hold on a divine sacrifice perfected by suffering and death. God is just, justifying *believers, i. e.,* those who have become identified with a sacrificial Saviour.

This representative death, this vicariousness of death in Christ is often called in theological discussion expiation or propitiation.

But these words come to us from the Latin, which did not have the providential preparation for Christian ideas that the Greek had. They came into Latin theology fresh from pagan rites in which the conception was of appeasing angry gods that delighted in blood, and were only willing to bless when this fiendish thirst had been assuaged. These words through the subtle power of language have insensibly caused the minds of interpreters to swerve to most unfortunate grossness in the anthropomorphism in which relations of God to sinners are sometimes pictured, as if the wrath of God were pacified by some piaculum

[illegible] something
[illegible] beyond
[illegible] the ve-
[illegible] leading to
[illegible]
[illegible] the Greek
[illegible] "[illegible]-seat"

[illegible] where
[illegible] the le-
[illegible] faith

[illegible] Christ
[illegible] When
[illegible] the use
[illegible] the find
w [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] the
[illegible] was no
[illegible] [illegible]
w [illegible] the
w [illegible] sin.
[illegible] death.
th [illegible] [illegible]-
li [illegible]
w [illegible] attitude
[illegible] He
m [illegible] sacri-
bo [illegible] never
firs [illegible] The He-
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forgiveness of sin. The words of Nehemi
describe God's attitude in appointing sacrifi
"Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracio
and merciful, slow to anger and of great kin
ness." ix: 19.

Then hilasmos is used of the accomplish
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cxxx: 4.

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from Egypt even until now." The noun,
verb, and the adjective all appear in these c
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Here then we have a safe basis on which
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But it is as "a merciful and faithful h
priest" that Christ makes reconciliation
the sins of the people, not merely as him
the sin-offering.

Here is God as the incarnate Son mediat
his own mercy, offering to man a sin-offe
for his use, and then as interceding priest
senting to God that sin-offering laden with

in what Christ has done or suffered, something to meet the demands of retribution beyond acting as our sacrifice and becoming the vehicle of faith and mercy, and thus leading to reconciliation and restoration.

We do better to pass straight from the Greek into our own Saxon, and talk of "mercy-seat" and "atonement."

The cross was the great mercy-seat where the incarnate God came down under *the demands of love* to meet the penitence and faith of returning sinners.

In the Greek of the New Testament, Christ is said to be *hilasmos* and *hilasteerion*. When we turn back to the Septuagint for the use of these terms and their congeners, we find them to mean *sin-offering, mercy-seat, forgiveness, merciful, gracious,* and the like.

But the idea of the sin-offering, and the shedding of blood without which there was no remission, in the Old Testament, is vastly different from that of the sacrifices of the heathen. It is the vehicle of confession of sin, of the acknowledgement of the desert of death, and of faith in the divine promiser of forgiveness.

In the institution of sacrifice the attitude of God was a point carefully guarded. He was never represented as demanding sacrifice to pacify his anger. *His wrath was never said to be turned away by sacrifice.* The Hebrew idea of atonement is the covering or

forgiveness of sin. The words of Nehemiah describe God's attitude in appointing sacrifice. "Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness." ix: 19.

Then hilasmos is used of the accomplished conciliation and remission of sin. Thus Ps. cxxx: 4.

"But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared." Dan. ix: 9. "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, and, xix, O Lord hear; O Lord forgive;" Num. xiv: 19, "as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even until now." The noun, the verb, and the adjective all appear in these citations. They all express mercy and the grace of forgiving love.

Here then we have a safe basis on which to interpret the New Testament use of the same terms. In the New Testament, we first meet the verb in the prayer of the publican: "Lord be merciful to me a sinner;" then in Heb. ii: 17: "To make reconciliation (old version) for the sins of the people."

But it is as "a merciful and faithful high priest" that Christ makes reconciliation for the sins of the people, not merely as himself the sin-offering.

Here is God as the incarnate Son mediating his own mercy, offering to man a sin-offering for his use, and then as interceding priest presenting to God that sin-offering laden with the

faith of penitent believers. These two passages speak only of divine mercy and atoning love. Then comes Rom. iii: 25, in which Christ is said to be set forth "as a propitiation," hilasteerion, "through faith, by his blood."

If we give the preference to this rendering over "mercy-seat," which it is very doubtful if we ought to do, still the almost exclusive use of the word in the Septuagint in this latter sense must have been present to the mind of Paul as he wrote. His thought must have been that Christ was *the vehicle of the divine mercy* to all who have faith in him.

The mercy-seat in the tabernacle represented the point of advance, so to speak, to which God came to meet those who would turn to him even as the father in the parable goes forth to meet the returning prodigal.

In Heb. viii: 12, the adjective "hileōs" is used of the features of the new covenant: "I will be *merciful* to their iniquities, and their sins will I remember no more." John, in two passages of his first epistle, says Christ is the hilasmos for our sins, rendered "propitiation." It is most significant that Christ is said to *be*, but never to *make* hilasmos. That is, he is ever the *living atoner* who mediates the divine mercy and human faith.

Hence Paul says: He was *raised* for our *justification, i. e.*, to carry out and apply the work provided for and begun in his death, by responding as a *living* omnipotent Saviour

to the faith reposed in him by penitent sinners.

In the view so common that the efficacy of the atonement lay in a something objective contributed by the sufferings of Christ, his resurrection had logically no part in justification. The resurrection becomes, so far as justification is concerned, a mere self-recovery of Christ from his humiliation and return to his preëxistent glory.

In the first passage, from John (ii: 2), great light is thrown upon the meaning by the fact that it is used in connection with the term "paraclete," "advocate." "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins."

It is the advocate who makes the "hilasmos" for our sins. Recall here the use of this term in the Septuagint for forgiveness or the state of reconciliation, and you see that the advocate is the reconciliation, that is, the actor in effecting the reconciliation for our sin. We then arrive at the precise sentiment of Paul in II. Cor. v: 19: "God was in Christ *reconciling* the world unto himself." The other passage in John's Epistle, iv: 10, agrees with the first in saying that God so loved us that he sent his Son to do the work that Paul says God did do in him.

It is worthy of note also that in the early Greek liturgies, the special prayer for mercy

and forgiveness *is called the prayer of the hilasmos.**

We must exclude the idea therefore that God could not bring life to the guilty without first inflicting a *penalty upon the innocent.*

In all discussion of atonement we stand upon the acknowledged meaning of the Greek word rendered atonement in the old version. That meaning is *reconciliation.* It is affirmed that the word atonement has changed in meaning and come to signify "both in popular usage and in theology, something leading the way to reconciliation." We have no concern at present with any such authority. We study the New Testament idea of the atonement directly from the specific language of the Bible.

And there is no Scripture, as we understand it, for an atonement which is a great treasury of piacular merit provided by Christ other than his death as our sin-offering and his perfect righteousness, both to be appropriated by our faith. Under the Jewish law there were as many atonements as there were accepted offerings for individual sinners, and under the

* Since writing the above my attention has been called to Cremer on these words. He says: The verb never means to *conciliate* God; that the biblical notion of the Hebrew kipper differs decidedly from the profane idea of "expiate," that the idea lying at the foundation of heathen expiations is rejected by the Bible. See last edition of his lexicon.

I have also noticed that Origen explains hilasmos by the work of the Paraclete. De Princip. ii: 6, 4.

law of Christ there are as many atonements as there are sinners reconciled to God. And the possibility and actuality of this great fact of sinners being thus reconciled, is called by Paul the *reconciliation* (in old version, atonement). Rom. v: 10, 11.

The incarnation has brought in the possibility of eternal life. Atonement is entrance upon that life; while to live unreconciled to God is to abide under the threatening of death. For atonement, on man's part, is turning from "the mind of the flesh" to "the mind of the spirit which is life." But "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God," and "death." Rom. viii: 6, 7.

The door of life is thus opened. "For if by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one, much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and the *gift of righteousness* reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ." The believer is thus united to a divine representative who *did not sin, and cannot die;* cannot die, for not only was "he delivered for our offences, but raised for our justification," *i. e.*, to complete in his own eternal life both of body and spirit the work for the eternal life of all believers. Henceforth we are in "Christ," as the Scripture so often phrases it, and our future is as divinely assured as the life of deity itself.

This life is maintained in us and carried forward by the indwelling of the spirit. He

works ever upon both our spirits and our bodies; "But ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwelleth in you. . . . But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his spirit that dwelleth in you."

"The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," therefore, is the recall of man to life from the heights of the cross, and our glad return. It is by penitence and pardon, by atonement effected and righteousness reëstablished, by reunion to God and immortality assured.

The second Adam, the life-giving Spirit, takes possession, and there can be no more death, but the falling away of the dust from the incorruptible man.

CHAPTER VIII.

NFANT LIFE.

"SEE that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." —Matt. xviii: 10.

"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." —v. 14.

"For of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xix: 14.

ONE-HALF of the human race die at a very early age. This mortality by infantile disease is to a great degree peculiar to mankind. It is not to be compared to the death of the young of the brute creation in which they become food for other animals or man. The death of the infant man, a being endowed with mental and spiritual life and whose body is laid carefully away to mark the hope of a renewed life, is an entirely different fact and under a different law. And we do not see the young of other animals the victims of countless diseases which sweep them off before they reach maturity and answer the object of their lives.

It is easy to believe therefore that infant mortality has special relations to our spiritual nature and development. And, from a philo-

sophical point of view, since the race is appointed to pass through an initial period of suffering and mortality, it is a happy law that brings so many to an early crisis and places them in a new life and hope. Would it be God's way with our race were it not a happy law? Not that it was God's only way of saving them or that He needs this way of making up a majority of the saved, and thus justifying his ways to men! But God's ways are good.

What the special relations are of the death of little children to our spiritual nature we are not permitted to know fully. We are shut up here under the law that God makes his revelations mostly for, as well as to, those who can understand them.

Yet Christian writers, as if by a law that men love to dispute most sharply over what they know least about, have not been slow from the earliest times to mix up the condition of infants with some of the gravest religious questions, as if they afforded the best of evidence on one side or another. And large bodies of Christians believe that the initiatory sacrament of the church has been perverted from the primitive practice by a kind of argument from necessity growing out of applying to infants a certain doctrine of original sin and its cure. Much of this discussion has in time past proceeded from monkish cells where there was little fitness for expounding or dis-

cerning the facts of infant life. The angel eyes and lisping tongues of little children have had small power to awake a "Christian consciousness" in a celebate clergy. The world however will not forget it of Pelagius, that whatever errors he may have held, one monk believed in the salvation of all infants; and the world could well spare Augustine arguments to show that unbaptized infants must be lost. And so to repeat, the Church came but slowly to discern the salvability of all infants.

Let us then keep very near to what Christ himself said on this theme, and indulge in but a few quite plain inferences. For Christ has given the world some very precious information, as in the words at the head of this chapter.

1. Among the legitimate inferences from what Christ said I place first: That those who lie in infancy have a *human* development in the resurrection life; and by the resurrection life I mean that life which begins immediately after death.* The fond mother ever images to herself her departed babe as a babe still, yet a second thought shows her that it cannot remain a babe, nor would she have it so. If it is saved and makes up its share of the kingdom of heaven, it must have a development happy and glorious beyond anything upon the earth. There is no alternative to this but the

* See chapter on this subject.

belief that all the dead are in an unconscious fixity until the end of time, a view condemned by any intelligent understanding of Scripture.

2. But it is impossible to see how this development can take place without involving the essential features of probation. It is conceded that death itself has no power to alter the human constitution; and we know nothing of human holiness except by choice between good and evil. Will any one imagine that infant souls in the spirit life are developed without this power of choice, and, if not without the power will they be without its exercise? Is holiness to be created in them by divine, irresistible power? Or are they to unfold into purity without ever having known temptation? Then will they no longer be like us or of us.

But opportunity for choice between good and evil is probation. Is it said: This brings into doubt the salvation of infants? If we were to confine our reasoning to the results of human experience here, it would do so; but we must not so limit our logic. We have the inspired assurance by the mouth of Paul (Rom. v.) that the work of Christ superabounds, *i. e.*, is more than sufficient to undo the work of Adam's sin, and we are allowed to believe that under the conditions of a more favoring life there may be a certainty of right choice without the loss of free agency. God has ar-

ranged a probation here (except in the opinion of the few who do not believe that there has been any probation since Adam's) with the certainty that all will sin, and can he not arrange a trial in some other sphere with a certainty, not to say that all will never sin, but that all will be saved? Let us not doubt it. And let us not doubt that the members of our race who shall have been removed from earth before they had chosen sin, and who shall have had their unfolding in the spirit life, will rejoice along with us at the last in right and duty freely chosen under a gracious leading adapted to their place and state.

And we must expect, therefore, that they also will go to a judgment to be assigned to their eternal state according to the things done, not in this body but in the spirit's body. For at least in justification and resurrection with the just are the essentials of judgment. Will any one suppose that the infant dead will have glorification without justification? Then will there be a great gulf fixed between parents and children. Christ will not be the same to them as to us. The Father will not be the same.

3. But if we concede the development of infants in this manner it opens a long vista before us. Such unfolding will not be limited to three score years and ten. There will be no death in old age for them to suggest an instantaneous transition from imperfection to

perfection, from habits of sinning to absolute holiness.

Their growth and their discipline must be supposed to go on even to the grand consummation of Christ's redemptive work for our race—to "the end."

And we are led to extend our inferences here beyond infant life, even at the risk of ourselves mixing up the infant condition with grave religious questions. If reason compels us to assume this progress for those who die in infancy, how must it be with the righteous who die in adult years? Are they to be advanced at once to a condition of holiness that knows no progress far beyond those who have had almost their entire unfolding in the resurrection life? Or are they to be left behind for all this period and to have no growth till after the judgment? If we are not prepared to affirm either of these propositions we see the promise of a development for all the saved until the great end is reached. And there is room here for opinions as to the nature of the changes in this period of change, which I will not stop to discuss, but which will readily occur to other minds.

This brings me to the remaining question regarding those who die without a knowledge of Christ, which I take up in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

LIFE OF THE HEATHEN.

It is an easy transition in thought from those who die in infancy to those who live in a prolonged infancy of intellect, knowledge and character. The world is full of such. We call certain nations heathen or pagan, as distinguished from Christian. But Christianity has not yet done its work so thoroughly anywhere, but that heathens are found among every people. Whether they are found in savage or civilized countries, they pass their lives without a Christian probation, *i. e.*, without any consciousness of an offer of light and help from Christ, which they may accept or reject. True, the apostle says, they are without excuse for their sins, but our present concern is of an opportunity of salvation from sin. Will any be brought to judgment without an offer of salvation from sins committed? Paul also says: "He hath shut up all unto disobedience *that he might have mercy upon all.* Rom. ix: 32. It is not necessary to understand him, as do some, that all are to receive the mercy that saves at last, but the only interpretation which has a better claim is that all

the race shall have at some time and in some way a full and *equal share* of the one great mercy to sinners, viz., an opportunity to know and accept the Saviour of the world, the atoning and life-giving Christ.

But you ask, If this is true, why is it not distinctly declared as a part of revelation. I reply, For the very good reason that revelation concerns those to whom it comes. The gospel is not a system of philosophy or even of theology. It is a concrete system of truth and duty for those to whom it is addressed, and does not undertake to say to any great extent what may be true of those to whom it never comes. To announce that there will be opportunity for repentance and pardon in the future could form no part of an offer of salvation which calls for immediate acceptance. Yet such opportunity might exist for those who had no other opportunity. Yet we should expect to find principles and intimations on which the thoughtful could rest hope and faith for all classes. Nor is this going beyond the warrant of the letter of Scripture. Christ authorized his disciples to use their reason in the development of the great principles of divine administration. He once said to his followers with an air of rebuke, "And *why even of yourselves* judge ye not what is right?" Lk. xii: 57. And in that ever-memorable utterance regarding the many mansions, Jn. xiv: 1. The words, "If it were not so I

would have told you," are equivalent to saying: Of course it is so; you might have known it of yourselves from what you know of the infinity of the Father's wisdom and works.

Those many abiding places must be of many conditions and grades; for it is absurd to suppose that these many spheres are all of the same character and use, especially as he says that among them he is going to prepare a particular place for those who have become his disciples here on earth. These words of our Lord certainly give us a glimpse of a varied administration in the future, in which human interests play a part, though it is not a part of the present offer of salvation fully to unfold them. Paul also affirms an administration of our Lord over the dead as well as the living: "For to this end Christ died and lived again that he might *be Lord of both the dead and the living.*" Rom. xiv: 9. To confine this administration merely to reward and punishment for the deeds of this life, is at least contrary to the spirit of Paul's words.

Here let me set together the following passages of Scripture.

"The Lord is good to all, his tender mercies are over all his works." Ps. cxlv: 9.

"Who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways." —Paul at Lystra.

"The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked."—Paul at Athens.

"Because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God." —Rom. iii: 25.

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law" (*i. e.*, if their "thoughts do not excuse them," verse 15).—Rom. ii: 12.*

That the second, third, and fourth of these passages contain substantially the same thought probably requires no evidence beyond the placing them together. Taken with the last and preceding context they give us Paul's doctrine of the Life of the Heathen.

He makes their case to be one of temporary or provisional treatment. They were suffered to go their own way; their ignorance was overlooked; their sins were passed over. This does not mean that all were saved, much less that all were lost; for God will render to "every one that worketh good," "glory, honor and peace, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

Wherein then lies *this passing over of sins by God?* Not in one respect alone. God had left them without a revelation of the promised second Adam, the Giver of Life, and also "in his forbearance," he had not executed upon

* See the close connection between verses 15 and 16 in the text of Wescott and Hort, and Tischendorf. Note the fitness in associating the action of "the thoughts" of men with the judgment of the "secrets of men."

them summary judgment for their sins. And we have no authority to say that this forbearance is limited to the present earthly life. Yet there is here no regarding their state as sinless; no promised exemption from deserved punishment. But Paul says in the first passage from the Epistle to the Romans with the context, that God has shown at last what he is going to do in this matter of sin and salvation, what his righteousness requires of himself and how sinners may gain a righteousness for themselves—a passage of most condensed thought, looking many ways. Paul does not indicate directly any retroactive work for the benefit of those who had died in sin before "this present time;" neither does he expressly exclude it. He puts Gentile and Jew alike upon the ground of hope and fear according to personal character, for he was not theorizing, but admonishing living men. He says however to the Athenians, that *now* God commanded all men everywhere to repent in view of a coming judgment. The question therefore arises, if the command to repent is based upon the revelation of "the man whom he hath appointed and raised from the dead," can the heathen who died before this revelation come into judgment on any equality with the rest of mankind without in some future mansion having also the revelation of the Christ and the command to repent in his name in addition to their "accusing and ex-

cusing thoughts?" And if God overlooked ignorance in times past, can He, the Unchangeable One, cease to overlook it, till the command to repent reaches all? Paul affirms of himself that he obtained mercy because he acted "ignorantly in unbelief." Shall this plea avail with the risen Son for one of his bitterest persecutors, and not for those who have died before hearing of their Lord? Is there nothing better for us than a doctrine of "an essential Christ," who never appears to men as a Saviour except in some forensic sense?

What I have said in another chapter of Old Testament saints "being made perfect" in Christ along with us, applies with double force here. The faithful few among the heathen are not to be saved "apart from us." Nor can we believe that the heathen's opportunity to be saved shall be entirely "apart from us." The apostle shows that the "passing over" of transgressions was not a finality for the race, but a waiting for a time appointed in God's perfect wisdom. But what was its relation to individual transgressors? Are we to suppose that God had a remedy for the race as a whole, but no remedy for the men who had made up the race? It is impossible. God's love is for individual souls, and we cannot imagine that love to have been reserved in any exclusive manner for those born after Christ's advent among men. We must believe that while God suffered men to walk in their own ways

he had in his infinite knowledge the consciousness of what he would yet do for these same sinful and benighted children, who were passing across the scene, and disappearing from earth before the fullness of time for the revelation of his Son, the Saviour.

But the heathen now are as the heathen before the time of Christ. We are not to imagine for a moment that the coming of Christ has placed them in any different relations to God before the gospel reaches them. The "*now commandeth* all men to repent" is when the voice of Paul's successor reaches their ears. But if ignorance tenfold more dense than Paul's abides with the heathen till death, are they never to meet any administration of mercy? Are we to conceive the resources of the Infinite to be so meager and his dealings so unequal?

Is it not far better, with old Clement of Alexandria, to take it as a matter of course that Christ made provision in Hades for those who had no knowledge of him on earth? Clement says:* If then he (Christ) preached the gospel to those in the flesh that *they might not be condemned unjustly, how is it conceivable that he did not for the same cause preach the gospel to those who had departed this life before his advent!* Coming in the middle of the ages his light is made to shine backward as well as

* Stro. 6. 6.

forward and thus to "lighten every man that cometh into the world." How else can he be the Saviour of the world? I remember wondering as a boy why God put off sending his Son into the world so late, and left so many to perish without the possibility of being saved by him. Our current orthodoxy makes but a poor answer to the child's question. We certainly do right to make the most of all the intimations of mercy which the Scriptures do contain and of all our knowledge of the ways of God opened to reason by the Spirit, to frame any conclusions of hope which are not inconsistent with the actual voice of the gospel. By this we do not encourage any to sin, for we say at the same time that those who have received the present gospel offer of mercy and rejected it have no grounds to expect a probation in the future. These in the future will stand over against those "who first trusted in Christ," as those who first rejected him. But for all who have not rejected Christ in actual purpose or willful neglect we must have hope in the divine goodness and absolute wisdom. It is not necessary for us to be able to say precisely how this life of hope shall be conditioned. It is enough to rest upon the infinitude of God our Father.

It has always puzzled the Doctors of the Church that Christ said so little of the time between death and the judgment, and strangely divergent theories have been advanced to cover

the ground. When we recall the length of this period for millions of the race as measured by earthly time, and compare it with the span of life enjoyed here, its possible importance needs no other emphasis. It is easy to see at least that Christ has left room here for his sovereign love to make arrangements of boundless extent and value for our race which should in no wise be incompatible with the present gospel dispensation. The silence with which Christ covered this vast period is certainly hopeful. No one will care to deny it. Under that silence we are allowed to honor his boundless love and wisdom by believing in a progress of the work of redemption begun in Eden and carried forward on Calvary.

We will suppose it true of this time that "My Father worketh *hitherto*, and *I work*." I believe that the Scriptures contain nothing which excludes this hope. But as certain passages are cited by some as limiting all administration of mercy to this life, I give them a brief notice.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, at ix: 27, in discussing the priesthood of Jesus finds some analogy, in death and judgment for the individual, with Christ's single sacrifice of himself and reappearance to complete the salvation of believers. But it is too much to say that, in affirming judgment to follow this life, the text excludes the possibility of judgment also following and adjusting the events

of any other life preceding the final award. If it be said that judgment cannot be properly said to follow upon death which is liable to modification after that event, I reply that this brief comparison, interjected in an argument on a widely different theme, is not specific enough to bear such a conclusion. When the point of the analogy is gained we cannot press the words farther with any certainty that we do justice to the writer's thought. In general the passage seems to point *to a judgment of justification*. It says, in effect, inasmuch as it is appointed to each man to die once—the bearing of his own sin—and after this a judgment, which in the case of a Christian is a justification, so the Son of man bears the sins of many in one death and in a judging or justifying reappearance completes their salvation. Are we to infer from this that Christ does nothing between his death and reappearance which concerns his justifying work? If not, why infer that no man can do anything between death and the judgment which concerns his judgment? The allusion is positive, enforcing a judgment for this life, but not therefore negative of judgment for some other sphere of life. But if one insist on thus applying it, it should be said that, as a part of the gospel message, its application is to those to whom it is addressed and not to those who have never heard the gospel. The record for judgment can be closed at death

for those who receive the gospel without being thus closed for those who have not received it.

The same is to be said of II. Cor. v: 10: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ that each may receive the things done in the body."

Rev. xxii: 11, 12, instead of referring to the death of each individual, is rather limited by what follows to the coming to final judgment of the Alpha and Omega.

Moreover, we understand the Bible to contain distinct intimations that grace for a part of mankind is extended beyond this life. This is the idea of the much discussed passage, I. Pet. iii: 19. It can hardly be necessary at this late day to add anything to the exegesis which has led the Revisers to their translation of this passage. Any other view is now seen by most minds, capable of judging, to be merely dodging the thought of the writer. And with reference to Peter's specifying the wicked of Noah's time as those to whom the preaching of Christ was directed, it should be borne in mind that if he wished to refer to a period of darkness he would from his standpoint more naturally go back to the old world before the light of Moses and the prophets than to other heathen. Peter again says, iv: 6, that the gospel was preached even to the dead, pointing back plainly enough to what he had said in the previous chapter, and then goes on

to suggest a living according to God in the spirit.

Here, I say, is a suggestion of grace and hope for some in the future. It does not follow that all who hear a gospel in the spirit world embrace it, but it reveals redeeming agencies at work. If now we look among the words of our Lord for anything that could have opened this matter to Peter, we are reminded of Jn. x: 16: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and they shall become one flock, one shepherd." Peter introduces the passage cited above by words (iii: 18) which are equivalent to those with which Christ introduces these as to his laying down his life. His sacrificial death is in both passages united with his call of grace to those of another fold.

It is fairly inferable also from Jn. i: 9, that Christ's light must be given to some after death, for it is to "lighten every man," which it certainly cannot be said to do in this life. In Heb. ii: 9, we are told that Christ is "crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste death for *every man*. We cannot limit this to the Christian ages nor to Christian peoples. But reason demands that we interpret it of some things in Christ's work that shall be available for all, and that all shall at some time have personal knowledge of what has been done for them and oppor-

tunity to accept it. Also in the new song of the redeemed, Rev. ii: 9, it is said, "For thou wast slain and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of *every tribe and tongue and people and nation.* In that last heavenly ascription of praise, all are seen to be alike related to the work of Christ.

Again, why does Christ single out one sin, that against the Holy Ghost, as one that shall not be forgiven in the life to come (Matt. xii: 32) but remain "An eternal sin," (Mk. iii: 29), if there is not to be forgiveness there of some other sins? That Augustine believed that there was such forgiveness is well known. But the impassable gulf fixed between the rich man and Lazarus will be cited as proof that no change to a better state can happen to any dying impenitent. This however is an attempt to force the parable beyond what it legitimately teaches. The rich man was a son of Abraham. He had been educated in the law of God. He represents therefore those who had enjoyed the ministrations of divine grace under the old dispensation and had rejected the truth. In Christian ages he can only stand for those who have in this life spurned the gospel. It is false reasoning to infer from his hopeless state that they who have never had a ministration of grace here, cannot have it hereafter. It must be remembered also that the rich man is not in Gehenna, as appears from his brothers being yet

alive. The New Testament, as I have said, nowhere represents men as sent at death to Gehenna. That doom is awarded only at the judgment. He is suffering pain and fear, but not the symbol of final destruction.* It is apparent also that a condition of suffering and anxiety for the repentance of others would indicate a hopeful state for any who had not been hardened into hopelessness by the rejection of revealed truth.† Set over against this picture of the rich man and Lazarus, Christ preaching in Hades to those who never had heard of either Moses or himself, and you have our argument for hope for the heathen.

Nothing is more common in pulpit instruction than the affirmation that death cannot change our moral nature. Let us assume this to be true. Then man must retain his capacity of moral enlightenment, his power of repentance and his power of right action. Unless, then, man is judicially cut off from the

* See chapter on Symbolism of Fire.

† Some may be interested to compare at this point the opinion of Augustine. He says: But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then, but all of them before that last and strictest judgment. But of those who suffer temporary punishment after death, all are not doomed to those everlasting pains which are to follow that judgment, for to some, as we have said, what is not remitted in this world is remitted in the next, that is, they are not punished with the eternal punishment of the world to come.—City of God, Bk. 21: 13, Dodd's translation.

possibility of these things and denied all measures of grace, we must expect his moral nature still to act, and with an intensity corresponding to his circumstances. If he has become fixed in the rejection of light in this life he will probably remain so still; if he has not had any light, he may be expected to respond to it when he reaches it. And can anything less than a positive declaration make us believe that the grace of God is not extended to his creatures in every conscious life they enter upon in his universe?

Dr. Noah Porter* would limit this probationary opportunity to the first vision of Christ upon entering the next world. This will doubtless be all that is needed by those who carry with them any germ of a godly character, that has sprung up in conscience led by the spirit, but I cannot suppose that our Father has no fostering grace for his human children who have had no light of revelation and may require time for their development and mayhap also the labors of us who here "had before hoped in Christ." Let us at least hope that when the heathen after death shall see Jesus, He shall in some way appear to them also as "crowned with glory and honor that he by the grace of God should have tasted death for every man" among them. Thus too will the words of Paul (Eph. i: 10) gain a fuller sig-

* North American Review, March, 1878.

nificance: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a *dispensation of the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ,* the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth." And we shall be less embarrassed in giving a generous interpretation to his words to Timothy I. ii: 4, where he declares it to be the will of God that *all men* should come to a knowledge of the truth as a means of salvation.

God has shown himself immeasurably more merciful than the imagination of men has been ready to picture him. Jonah could not abide that God should not destroy the Ninevites, because he understood that his word was pledged to it. In later times compare our Lord's parable of the tares with the attempt of men to exterminate heresy from the Church. Let us leave room in our systems of truth for the operations of a wisdom in God for reaching all his creatures, that shall be a fit counterpart to his love. If God is love, God is also wisdom.

A probation for the heathen in the future has been called a "new departure." But we differ from our New England fathers only in the phrasing of our hopes. Men who recall the theological language of forty years ago well remember the phrase: "The uncovenanted mercies of God," as a common expression of those times. This covered the ground of

hope for the heathen, and for many whom the tender hearts of friends could not call heathen. It did not expound God's possible methods, nor the extent of his mercy, but was a way of expressing a faith in an administration of mercy beyond what is revealed in the gospel for those to whom the gospel had never effectively come. "Verily there is nothing new under the sun." "That which has been is that which shall be." Man's reason and man's hopes are ever the same, and still the word of God abideth sure so far as it has been spoken.

But some prefer to bring a practical test to this doctrine, and say that it will "cut the sinews of missionary effort." But is the great impulse to Christian missions a desire to give the heathen a chance to escape from a hell of endless sin and suffering? Does that sound much like our great commission? Are we so base? Are we so under the one motive of fear? Have we forgotten that the motive of fear carried beyond a certain point paralyzes all nobler motives?

The idea with which Peter began his missionary work appears in his address after the miracle at the Beautiful Gate of the temple: "Unto you first, God having raised up his servant, *sent him to bless you in turning every one of you from your iniquities.*" Acts iii: 36. The Lord himself gave Paul his missionary commission by voice from the sky: "The Gentiles unto whom I send thee *to open their eyes that*

they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me." Acts xxvi: 18.

What was the motive that moved Paul? Though he reminded men of the terror of the Lord, as one means of persuading them after he reached them, yet for himself he said, "*The love of Christ constraineth us,* whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom *that we may present every man perfect in Christ.*"

Christ was first announced to the world as a saviour from sin, and the true motive for spreading a knowledge of him in the world, in addition to the simple obedience to his command, is the desire to save *living men from sin while they are living,* and to extend the reign of Christ over the whole earth. This begins in them the salvation that shall extend over the eternal future. But it is not necessary for our zeal that we believe that God's resources of grace will be exhausted with our efforts. To many the world would thus look far too hopeless. But when we believe that we are but co-working with a God who will bring in his boundless possibilities to complete the work he directs us to begin, then it is that we can go forward in the strength and courage of the Lord of Hosts.

CHAPTER X.

RESURRECTION LIFE.

THERE is a spiritual body.—PAUL.

Is the Soul by itself man? No . . . If the Saviour proclaimed salvation to the soul alone, what new thing beyond what we heard from Pythagoras and Plato and all their band did he bring us?—JUSTIN MARTYR.

But that which hath received both understanding and reason is man, not the soul by itself; man, therefore, who consists of the two parts, must continue forever.—ATHENAGORAS.

Now Spiritual men shall not be incorporeal spirits, but our substance, that is, the union of flesh and spirit, receiving the Spirit of God, makes up the spiritual man.—IRENÆUS.

THE work of the "Life-giving Spirit"* stops not with assuring immortal life to the soul of man, but carries forward the work of creation—the inbreathing of life into man—by filling the primal capacity for immortality with the real beginnings of eternal life for body as well as soul. The citations from the Fathers given above are a part of their arguments for a resurrection by reconstruction, but they are equally adapted to the real Pauline doctrine of a resurrection by unfolding. The early apologists were not in a position to discern the full truth in this matter. The evolution-

*I. Cor. xv: 46.

ary plan of the universe, including man, had not yet discovered itself to the mind of mankind, as it has in our times.*

It is to Paul, after Christ, that we are indebted for all that we are permitted to know of this work. And his doctrine is that through both life and death God works out an incorruptibility for the whole man, and our bodies are to be "conformed to the body of his (Christ's) glory." Phil. iii: 27. This is the divine evolution of the eternal man. In the eighth of Romans Paul marks the steps of this genesis of eternal life.

A closely imitative translation of the first part of the ninth verse reads: *But ye are not in flesh but in spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.*

The tenth verse shows that being "in spirit" and having the Spirit of God in us is equivalent to having Christ in us, and that, in that case, though the body dies, this "spirit" (human held in close union by the divine), lives. This is the first step.

Then in the eleventh verse it is promised that the divine Spirit dwelling in us shall make alive our mortal bodies. Mark, it is not said that God will thus quicken our *dead* bodies, but our *mortal* bodies. This seems to be a promise to infuse the principle of the

* But Origen anticipates to a great extent our most advanced ideas. See Contra Celsum, v: 18, 23.

resurrection life into our bodies during the present life, by the indwelling of the Spirit. This makes us ready for a bodily as well as a soul life immediately after death. This is the second step; and by it we become possessed of the power and working of the "life by Christ" in our whole being.

We thus enter upon our last conflict assured of a triumph. While dust returns to dust, all that divine power through the Spirit has evolved in man takes on incorruption.

And here we see the difference between the "incorruption" of revelation and the "immortality" of philosophy. Immortality was for the soul. Philosophy could see no hope for the body. But "incorruptibility" is for the man, rescued and transformed, but man still, body and soul. Such is the divine choice of language to be the vehicle of revelation.

Incorruption is the opposite of death as presented to the senses; and it itself suggests that there is a *material* essence in man that escapes the visible corruption. This has been thought to be a modern advanced opinion growing out of the evolutionary thought of modern science, but there is evidence that the germ at least of this view was held in the early Church.

Polycarp, in his prayer at his martyrdom, says: "I give thee thanks that I should have a part . . . in the cup of thy Christ unto the resurrection of eternal life *both of soul and*

body through the incorruption from the Holy Ghost." Martyrdom of Polycarp, chap. 14.

And Irenæus says: "But we do now receive a certain portion of his Spirit tending toward perfection and *preparing us for incorruption,* being little by little accustomed to receive and hear God, which also the apostle terms an earnest . . . This earnest therefore thus dwelling in us renders us *spiritual even now,* and the mortal *is swallowed up* by immortality. . . . This however does not take place *by a casting away of the flesh,* but by the impartation of the Spirit." v: 8.

And Origen says: . . . Since it is an attribute of the divine nature alone, *i. e.,* of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to exist without any material substance and without partaking in any degree of a bodily adjunct, another perhaps may say that in the end every bodily substance will be so pure and refined as to be like the ether, and of a celestial purity and clearness. How things will be, however, is known with certainty to God alone, and to those who are his friends through Christ and the Holy Spirit. De Princip. i: 6. 4.

Tertullian, also, as is well known, held to a certain corporeity of souls. De Anima, chap. v.

It is no objection to this view that this germinant essence within us escapes our sense perceptions at present. The world is growing very familiar with entities that escape its observation except by their effects.

Who has seen the vehicle that now carries the human voice almost without limit of distance?

Make the diamond a little more transparent and you will need other eyes than ours to see it. Or do you suppose that the worm that crawls forth into the sunshine is conscious of the change that is already shaping it for a new element? But the eye of the superior being who can concentrate the light upon its organism beholds it with perfect distinctness.

It is a matter of surprise, in view of what Paul has written, that the opinion has gained such currency in the past that there is a state of life after death in which spirits exist without bodies, *i. e.*, without a hold upon matter which gives them an objective form and defined locality. "The separate state" has become a familiar phrase. But there is no scriptural authority for it, as we conceive. The intermediate state is not a separate state.

There are two states or stages of the resurrection life, one preceding the general recall to the sphere of the renewed earth, and the other the eternal state following it. But the former is the resurrection as truly as the latter, and is so spoken of in the scriptures, and neither state is without the body which "God giveth as it hath pleased him." Paul's words: "There is a spiritual body," have been misunderstood. "Spiritual" has been taken to mean non-material, whereas the form of

the Greek word shows that it means simply a body which belongs to the spirit, or is animated by the spirit; just as in the previous clause he calls our present bodies psychic bodies, *i. e.*, bodies animated by the psychee or present natural life. And it would be just as reasonable to interpret psychic bodies as bodies which are nothing but psuchee, as to make spiritual pneumatic bodies nothing but spirit, pneuma. Paul, properly read, affirms that spirits have bodies, and he illustrates by saying that God has given to every seed its own body, *i. e.*, not new seed like itself, *but the plant into which the seed grows.* This is the point of contrast between the "bare grain" and "the body which shall be." So "the celestial bodies" are no more our present bodies than the kernel of wheat is the perfected plant. The relation of the present to the future body is germinant and fixed "after its kind." This is the measure of identity between the two.

A bodiless life can be nothing but thought and feeling entirely undiscernible by other personalities of its kind, if indeed such a life is capable of being fairly imaged to the mind at all in any positive way. The conception is essentially negative. It is mere thought in the wind; no not even that, for wind has its body. The quotations I have made from the Fathers are most pertinent here.

The opinion of such an existence has arisen

from the fact that we lay aside in the grave all of matter belonging to us that is now visible to us, and forget of what varied and tenuous forms matter is capable. We have forgotten that the more subtle forms of matter seem to have even greater force than the grosser forms, and yet remain well defined forms of matter. We make hasty conclusions from our present senses instead of looking to the power of God. "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God."

We are now prepared to understand Paul in the first ten verses of II. Cor. v. Nothing could be more squarely opposed than these verses to the idea of a state of life separate from any form of body. In his desire to depart and be with Christ he has no thought but that of rising to a more ample and stable personality in all that defines the human person. He says in effect that death is not an unclothing but a new-clothing, that absorbs the mortal by revitalization—*a swallowing up of life.* He says expressly that he desires this reclothing that he may not be found naked. But what nakedness is there like spirit without body?

That the intermediate state is a part of the resurrection life is sufficiently clear from the words of Christ (Matt. xxii: 32), where in reply to the Sadducees he referred to the patriarchs long dead as in the resurrection life: "But as *touching the resurrection of the dead* have ye

not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living." That God was not then the God of the dead but of the living is Christ's own proof of the resurrection. This shows that the patriarchs had already entered upon the resurrection life.

Possibly some one may quote as against this conclusion the words of Peter at the Pentecost: "David ascended not into the heavens." But a little thought ought to convince any one that Peter here, in fixing the reference of the Psalm to the Messiah, means simply to say that David had had no such experience as Christ had, and had not entered upon the final state of which Christ's resurrection body was the first fruits. It is not to be supposed that he denies to David what Christ had affirmed of the patriarchs and what Moses and Elijah appeared as enjoying in the mount of transfiguration.

In the verses preceding what Christ said about the patriarchs he had said that in the resurrection men should be as the angels of God; and the close connection shows that he is speaking of such resurrection life as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were enjoying; for he passes directly from answering their questions involving a supposed difficulty to improve the opportunity, to demolish their scepticism regarding the resurrection.

Men therefore pass immediately to a state like that of the angels. But angels are always represented as controlling material forms sufficiently dense to appeal to the senses of man.

This body of the intermediate state may be at first in a condition analogous to the infancy of our present bodies, or it may be perfect from the first in its adaptation to the sphere in which it finds itself. We know that at the last the whole change shall come over the then living "in the twinkling of an eye," and the living must then, as ever, include those of every age.

But it will be asked how this view can harmonize with the scripture representation of a simultaneous resurrection of all at the end of the world. This representation is too definite and too often repeated to be accommodated to any theory of the coming of Christ which does not provide for a grand crisis, both in time and space relations, which is still future. For example in John v: 26-29 the language easily covers the constant gift of resurrection life as believers die, and also the final establishment of all in their eternal state. "The . . . hour *now is* when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." But "the hour *cometh* in which all that are in their tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth."

Christ says nothing of "with what manner

of body they come." His only allusion to the resurrection body is where he bids men beware of Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. The doctrine of the apostles respecting the end is that at the call of the Lord men will reappear in connection with this earth and enter upon a new life from this sphere of existence as a center or home; that the dead shall rise from their graves and the living be changed and all appear with bodies "conformed to the body of His glory."

But the grand fact, that explains this simultaneous reappearance which we call the general resurrection, is the change promised to come upon the heavens and earth themselves. "Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved . . . according to his promise we look for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." II. Pet. iii: 13.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away and the sea is no more." Rev. xxi: 7.

And this word: "Yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain." Heb. xii: 27. "I go to prepare a place for you." John xiv: 1. There seems to be indicated in these passages a final development of this planet to fit it for the home of the righteous.

Hence I have said above that the final state is pictured to us under new space as well as time relations.

There must be some truth here which God can communicate to us in no better way. Any such final unfolding of the earth itself would naturally, perhaps we should say, necessarily, be accompanied by a farther development of the beings recalled to inhabit it as the center of their activities. To expect this it is only required that we believe that in our future we shall be subject to progressive life under the hand of the infinite Father as we have been in the past. In this last consummation, "the coming of the day of God," (II. Pet. iii: 12) we see what is oftenest spoken of as *the resurrection.* But nothing revealed concerning it is opposed to the belief that men enter upon a resurrection life for body as well as soul immediately after death.

As opposed to the error that the soul has no life at all, *i. e.*, is unconscious during all the time preceding the final gathering together, it is sufficient to cite passages such as Christ's promise to meet the dying thief in paradise; the assertion of Christ that Lazarus at death was conveyed to Abraham's bosom, and indeed the whole parable of the rich man and Lazarus; Paul's desire to depart *and be with Christ;* the messenger who brought the revelation to St. John, who declared that he was one of John's human brethren; also

John's vision of the souls of those who had been slain, Moses and Elijah in the mount with Christ, and the dead to whom Christ is said to have preached the gospel.

The dead therefore are in no sense literally in their tombs. When then they are spoken of as in the tomb, and as coming forth from the tomb, it is easy to see that the language is used of visible disappearance and reappearance from the earthly point of view. The last that is seen of the visible man is the body deposited in the sepulcher. In the language of the eye therefore the dead are in their graves. And so in the same language they are said to return by the way they disappeared. There is also in this language a profound assertion of the personal identity of the risen man with his former self; and this is what constitutes the veritable resurrection.

Those who insist that the identical particles of matter that made up our earthly bodies must be raised, fail to show how such identity consists with the "incorruption" of the risen body. They are obliged to suppose that in the act of reconstitution the matter is changed, else corruption would still belong to it, and is not an evolution more in accord with what we know of the divine working than a fiat at the last moment which shall make over each body into the celestial body? Especially, as the process of bringing in the new life is, as we have seen, the

work of the Divine Spirit upon both body and soul.

Hence it is perfectly natural to regard the *body of the intermediate state* as a preparatory condition to the final manner of life of the redeemed.

It may be asked, if the celestial body is quickened by the Divine Spirit dwelling in man and is the work of the second Adam as a life-giving Spirit, how the wicked can have part in the resurrection.

The difficulty in answering this question comes from God's method in revelation. The future is mostly made known to us by promises, and there are no promises to the wicked save as they cease to be wicked. God's threatenings do not require any setting forth of the "how" they are raised. That they are raised is plainly declared, and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus pictures a conscious life in Hades for sinners immediately after death. But if they have not yielded themselves to the indwelling of the Spirit, then no "Spirit," in Paul's sense, has been formed in them, nor has any present quickening of their "mortal bodies" taken place.

They are certainly in some way left far behind the righteous.

The quickening upon which depends the endless life they do not share in as long as they are estranged from God and Christ, "for this is life eternal that they should know thee

the only true God and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus the Christ." But while the primal sentence remains suspended for the spiritual part of their being, their life must go on under the eye and according to the all-sufficient wisdom of the Creator.

And as the time when the mortality of the body is to work out the natural death of each one is known only to God, so with the final mortality of the soul, its time is subsequent to such a resurrection as God has seen fit to appoint to it, and, as we shall find Justin Martyr saying, the soul will endure in punishment *as long as God wills.*

John in the Revelation indicates (xx: 5) some kind of separation in time of the rising of the wicked from that of the just. But exactly what is meant here is involved with another question, viz., the character of the rising that precedes the thousand years.

For my present purpose, which is chiefly to outline the source and nature of the resurrection life, it makes little difference whether the general recall of the dead be all at once or be divided into two by the space of a thousand years. But I strongly incline to the belief that the premillennial resurrection of the revelation is nothing more than what I have called the intermediate stage of the resurrection life. John says that he saw the *souls* living. In view of the way in which men separate in thought the dead from this earthly sphere

and speak of them as *souls*, there seems to be no reason for his using this term unless he designed to indicate a life not visible on the earth. He connects their "living" closely with "reigning with Christ." And that Christ has been reigning over the earth in carrying forward its redemption ever since his ascension no one doubts. But if we were carried back to the gloomy days of the first persecutions we might need just this revelation to enable us to believe it. And nothing could so cheer and strengthen the sufferers of such a period as a glimpse of those who had been beheaded and burned, alive in the spirit world and received into co-working with Christ in the glorious administration of His kingdom. That the carpenter of Nazareth was to have the shaping the world's destinies was not as clear in John's time as it has since become; who then would have dreamed that the era was at hand when all time, the world around, would be reckoned in years of Jesus Christ?

Here is a sense in which the days of the Son of man have already come.

As to the exact time, a thousand years, that is probably a part of the framing of the picture, or we may take the *last thousand years* of the present period as furnishing the substance of the picture. Beyond this the genius of prophecy will probably not let us go.

It is not to be expected that men will come

to an agreement precisely what to anticipate in regard to the coming and reigning of the Son of man, for it is of the nature of prophecy not to be understood in full until it is fulfilled. Else the world would keep itself busy trying to prevent or work out by human contrivance such fulfillment.

But to return to the rising of the wicked; as their life is not a reigning with Christ it may be that this is all that John intended by saying that they *lived not* till the end of the thousand years. The life and the recall of the incorrigible is but for judgment and is not life from the point of view of Christ's kingdom on the earth. But the revelation was given to John for the comfort of the saints, and not to gratify curiosity regarding the future life of unbelievers.

Of course if there is to be a premillennial resurrection to this earthly sphere, then John's "first resurrection" is not the same as the present resurrection state of the departed. But this would in no degree impair the argument for a present resurrection life as I have outlined it.

With the resurrection life our Triumph of Life objectively begins.

The sainted dead, clothed in white robes, are now waving the palms of victory. "And they cry with a great voice saying: Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb. . . These are they which came out

of great tribulation and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore they are before the throne of God and they serve Him day and night in his temple. And for this we all long, not "that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life."

NOTE.—The question is often raised whether the idea of the resurrection of the body is exclusively a biblical idea. To answer this question it is needful to distinguish between an idea and a formulated doctrine. There are few biblical ideas that have not some shadowy anticipations or fading relics, it is often difficult to determine which, in the literature of the early pagan nations. The Egyptians had an idea of the immortality of the body, and possibly of its reanimation upon the earth, though Wilkinson says that their writings do not contain a *doctrine of the resurrection.* The Egyptian Book of the Dead, chap. 42, after comparing the various parts of the body to those of different Gods, says: There is not a limb of him without a God.

Thoth is vivifying (or watching) his limbs. Not a day he has not been squeezed in his arms or clasped in his hands. Men, Gods, Spirits, the Dead, mortals, beatified Spirits, Illuminated, do not make any attack upon him. He it is who comes out sound. Immortal is his name.

Beholder of millions of years, that is his name.

And in chap. 155, under the vignette of the Sun shedding its rays on the mummy on its bier: Hail my Father Osiris. My limbs are with thee, thou dost not corrupt . . . I am! I am! I live! I live! I grow! I grow! I wake in peace. I am not corrupted. I am not suffocated there. I grow tall. My substance is not sent away. My ear does not grow deaf. My head and neck do not separate. My tongue has not been taken away; it has not been cut out. My eye-brow is not plucked out. No injury is done to

my body. It neither wastes nor is suffocated in that land for ever and ever. Bunsen's Egypt's Place in Universal History, vol. v.

But the Book of Hades says: The earth belongs to thy mummy, heaven belongs to thy soul. Records of the Past, vol. x. sec. 8, A.

What have we here but the faint dawn that precedes the sun-rising of Revelation, as we might expect from the harmony of God's work in man's thoughts.

As regards the Persians, it has been boldly claimed that the Jewish and Christian doctrine of resurrection was derived from the Zoroastrian system. But more recent investigations seem to have shown satisfactorily that the ancient Zendic writings contain no such doctrine, and that it does not appear in Persian literature until a date later than the Jewish exile.

This makes it probable that the borrowing was the other way. For the doctrine is found in the earlier part of Isaiah which preceded the time of the exile. And whatever any one thinks of the narratives of the book of Daniel, it claims in general to give some account of the carrying of the knowledge of the True God to the East by the Jews, and impressing it upon those peoples.

And what document can the opponents of this view bring to offset it? See Hardwick's Christ and other Masters, p. 564.

No one has claimed, so far as I know, that the Greeks had this doctrine except as the Stoics had an idea of the cyclical renewal of all things.

CHAPTER XI.

THE JUDGMENT.

JUDGMENT is often a sound of dread even to the believer; but Christ said much which is suited to prevent this impression and produce the opposite. Some of his most sympathetic and inspiring utterances relate to his office as Judge: *e. g.*, "And he gave him authority to execute judgment *because he is the Son of man,*" Jn. v: 27, *i. e.*, because he can come to the work of judgment as a sympathizing brother. This he says of the Father's appointment of the son as the Judge of the world. In taking upon himself this office, he says, as if to disarm all fear: "for I came not to judge the world but to save the world," Jn. xii: 47. "For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him;" "he that believeth on him is not judged," Jn. iii: 17, 18.

The judgment will be the crisis of redemption, the completion of the believer's justification. In it hope will pass into fruition, and all shall become eternal.

The Scriptures represent the judgment as taking place upon a given day, in the presence

of a universal assembly, with the Judge seated upon a throne and opening a book from which a verdict is pronounced. Some object to the reality of this picture of judgment thus fixed in time and place.* But it doubtless gives the best impression of the reality that we are capable of receiving. It is therefore a true representation, though we may well believe that with enlarged capacities we shall leave such views far behind us.

Those who believe at all in a personal God, and in man's personal accountability to Him, must believe substantially in the New Testament doctrine of a judgment of justification or condemnation for every individual of the race. But our relations to this great certainty and necessity of the future are often but illy conceived. It is clothed with terror often to those who should anticipate it with joy, and is looked forward to with indifference by many who should be filled with apprehension. The apostle John, in his Epistle, i: 4, 17, tells us that the crowning work of love is to give us *boldness* in the day of judgment, while the timid Christian is apt to regard such an idea as presumptuous if not blasphemous. Christ tenderly endeavored while on earth to inspire his followers with confidence for the future meeting when he should return, and to rob the glorious day of his appearing of all dread except for his inveterate enemies. The part of

*See note at end of chapter.

the twenty-fifth chapter of Matt. describing the judgment scene has this evident design. In this chapter only has our Lord given us anything suggestive of the details of the final judgment scene. Here he has come down to our human imagination in giving a dramatic form to the greatest and most solemn event of the future. He places himself upon a literal throne, with all nations before him, and as a king proceeds to separate the righteous from the wicked, as one separates sheep from goats. He gives to these hosts one voice in familiar colloquy with the king, and then appoints to each his final condition. The most remarkable feature of the proceeding of the Judge in this scene is the way in which the grounds of sentence are shifted from what at first appears to be a personal relation to the Judge, to the decided opposite, so that the award finally is not based at all upon a conscious personal attitude toward Christ, but upon acts and characteristics which are developed in the commonest walks of life.

The king is no selfish despot, making everything depend upon obsequious watching upon his person; neither is he a scrupulous lawgiver with a lofty and absolute code in hand, scanning every detail of law on one side and life on the other; but everything is simple and concrete in the spirit of the homeliest life. It is the relieving the hungry, the thirsty and the sick; it is kindness to the stranger and the

prisoner, things which men often do almost by instinct. These are the objective standard by which a share in the heavenly kingdom or the final punishment is meted out. Christ thus makes the judgment what we call extremely practical, resting upon what is most easily understood and constantly enacted. Could he have shown his divine condescension more clearly, and his evident design to dispel those fears that arise in so many minds at the thought of having the whole life subjected to the scrutiny of the infinite and most holy God, with the issue of eternal life or death.

He speaks to the hearts that warm to the lives of those about them, though God may still be a terrible name to them, and even the loving Christ himself seem infinitely removed from them. For all such, what words are these: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."

Not only does the king make his award depend on what is mediate and indirect, but on what may be merely germinant and feeble. What else mean the words: "even these least." It is not following the popular preacher, nor intimacy with the conspicuous saint. No, but whatever you have done or refused to do to the least of mine, it may be some one whom the world does not recognize at all as belonging to me, it may be some one farther from me than yourself even, that shall be the touch-

stone, he shall be as the gate of life or death to you. Thus every man's judgment is brought to his own door, among his own neighbors, in his own household.

And let us not suppose that this pertains alone to lands where Christ has been preached and is represented by professing believers. The judge has all nations before him. This must include nations who had never heard of Christ in the flesh. And the language conveys the idea that the king finds sheep as well as goats in all the nations. And it is of sheep such as these that he says: "These my brethren, even these least." It destroys the whole power of the scene to refer it simply to those in Christian lands who, living after the time of the Lord had merely never actually seen him in the flesh, but had been associated with believers who avowedly represented him. It is also inconsistent with Matt. x: 40, where Christ distinctly said to his disciples: "He that receiveth you, receiveth me," and Jn. xv, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Those to whom the gospel had come could express no surprise at finding Christ in their believing brethren, for the gospel has ever contained these words. No, the righteous are the "sheep" from among all nations. Even if with Alford we suppose that "the saints" should be conceived in the scene as already in glory, judging the world with the Lord, yet, by combining with this chapter, Matt. xix:

28, where the twelve are promised a part in judging the tribes of Israel, we have a universal judgment, while allowing "the nations" to refer only to the Gentiles.

But let not any one imagine for a moment that in all this Christ belittles the judgment of the world, and deprives it of any great spiritual and discriminative principle. The principle insisted on is *love like that of Christ.* It is finding brethren where Christ would find them, and doing for them in the spirit of self-sacrifice. It is similar to the thought in Mk. ix: 37, "Whosoever receiveth one of such little children in my name receiveth me." Doing for Christ's "brethren" and doing "in the name of Christ" is doing in the *spirit of Christian devotion and hope,* even though Christ in himself may not be known to either doer or receiver. He that takes up a little child in the desire of saving it or helping it as *a creature of God* receives Christ and makes Christ his brother.

The spirit of responding to the wants of men as children of one Father in heaven is the spirit of Christ and brings us face to face with him in his work. Even as the Christian monk known as the "Persian Sage," Aphraates, wrote so long ago: "He (Christ) said to them, that which ye have not done to the *needy* ye have also not done to me."*

* See Zahn's Tatian's Diatessaron, § 80.

But we are not to understand our Lord to say that every instinctive help, every kindness in meat and drink makes men treat him as a brother. For the whole race would then be included and there would be no goats to be placed on the left hand. Whereas many are seen to be sent to the left hand to be punished.

They are cast away as being found destitute of the feeblest motions of this principle of love. While all who possess it, even if but in germ, like mustard seed and the particle of leaven, will be welcomed at the right hand and given a place in the kingdom in which the new life may develop. This removes judgment from the realm of mere nature, and lifts it to the plane of the spiritual, makes it turn upon love and self-sacrifice.

In other words: Men will be separated by the all-discerning eye of the king into the "sheep" and the "goats." But the evidence to the world that they are "sheep" and "goats" *may be only what they have done or refused to do to one another.* If they have shown to one another the spirit of self-sacrifice which is the great law of Christ, they are prepared for the kingdom as the kingdom has been prepared for them.

But not every gift of meat and drink is in the spirit of self-sacrifice. To give "in my name" and to "my brethren" is as "the sheep" give; *i. e.*, if the gift represents the inner character of "sheep" as marked off from

"goats" it is both an element and an evidence of acceptable character. The man who is moved by the spirit of love like to Christ's belongs to Christ and his kingdom. Unfortunately this is no doctrine of universal salvation. For too many "goats" remain who never show this spirit even to "one of these least," who have in them no grain of the mustard seed of spiritual life, none of the leaven of the heavenly kingdom.

But the whole spirit of these memorable words of our Lord is adapted to give us courage for ourselves and a wide hope for others.

It leads us to expect to see brethren in the brighter light of that day which we had not discerned as such here.

And yet, this twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew is to many Christians the most terrible chapter in the Bible. And it is because there is revealed in it an eternal punishment for such as shall be found at the last entirely destitute of any love for that which is Christlike. Many believers allow this terror to interpret all the tenderness instead of allowing the tenderness to interpret the terror.

But it cannot be a matter of accident that the one utterance of our Lord that more than all others is considered decisive for an eternal punishment of the wicked, is by the Lord himself associated with this brightest picture of gentleness and charity in the Judge. It is enough to reassure the most timid Christian

and exalt the grace of the Judge in the eyes of all. And what is more, this way of putting things by Christ is conclusive against all exaggeration of severity in interpreting the doom of the wicked, in determining what this punishment and this fire are. Here is where the spirit of this scene has been utterly lost upon good and wise men who have permitted themselves to be led by various theories into views utterly at variance with a proper conception of the tender love of God, and even with what is best in men. But of this in the chapter on punishment.

NOTE.—Μεμνημένοι . . . καὶ τῆς μελλόυσης αυτοῦ δευτέρας παρουσίας ἐν ᾗ ἔρχεται μετὰ δόξης καὶ δυνάμεως, κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς.—LITURGY OF ST. CLEMENT.

Perhaps we ought not to be surprised or grieved at the great difference of opinion regarding the time and manner of the second coming of Christ. Perhaps it is enough if we are ever *mindful* of it and open to all real light that is shed upon it. It was and is, as is generally believed, a matter of prophecy. And it seems to be of the genius of divine prophecy that it shall not be fully understood until it is fulfilled. Else men would be busying themselves with efforts to prevent or hasten its fulfillment.

As the matter now stands Christians are divided between not only expectations of a pre- and a post-millennial coming, but between a

looking for a future coming and the belief that it is a present reality.

I shall content myself with the briefest indication of the evidence which is decisive with my own mind, that the coming is future and will coincide with the end of redemptive agencies in this world.

In the first place Christ, in speaking of this very subject, viz., the claims of men that he had come or was to come so and so, said: "Believe it not; for as the lightning cometh forth from the East and is seen even unto the West, *so shall be the coming,* παρουσία, of the Son of man." This must mean that it will be an event known to all when it occurs, so that there shall be no possibility of dispute about it. There will not be needed any word of a preacher or writer of a book to point it out. It hardly needs to be said that no such universal recognition of the second coming of Christ has yet taken place. Again, when speaking in a like style of his coming, as recorded in Luke 17, he says of those troublous times at the destruction of Jerusalem when men should vainly strive to find the Christ as their deliverer: "Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man and shall *not* see it, indicating that the days of the Son of man should not be associated wtih those events so disastrous to the Jewish people, not even in their beginning.

The world (αἰών) to come, of which Christ

spake at different times, is identified in Luke (xx: 34, 35) with the resurrection life, and there is no evidence that it includes a concurrent administration of a celestial life and a terrestrial like the present. Jewish ideas of what the Messianic age was to be are poor authority for the kingdom of Christ. αἰών is *time-world, i. e.*, the world from the point of view of time as κόσμος is from the point of matter and space.

The Messianic anticipations in the Acts, viz., the words of the angels (i: 11) and of Peter (iii: 20, 21) still seem to demand a personal return of the Lord to conclude his redemptive work.

As to the much disputed passage Matt. 24 and its parallels, I have long inclined to the opinion that Bengel among commentators has given the true solution in marking the distinction between πάντα ταῦτα (v. 34) and ἡμέρας ἐκείνης (v. 36), "these things," the destruction of Jerusalem and "that day," the end of the world. This distinction appears in Mark's account, and also, though less clearly, in Luke's.

Some will hesitate to accept Bengel's interpretation of εὐθέως μετά, v. 29. But Luke makes the signs in the sun, etc., to follow the "fulfillment of the times of the Gentiles." These times are not yet fulfilled. The Jews are still afflicted, to the great disgrace of the Christian world, and Jerusalem is trodden

down. See Alford on this point. It is *not yet* therefore "immediately after" the events Christ was predicting—not yet time for us to expect the sign of the Son of man. This agrees also with the prediction in v. 14. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations, and *then shall the end come.*" We must give these words an interpretation worthy of the Lord, and the divine method of grace.

A lone missionary here and there will not answer the conditions. Nothing but a career of Christian civilization for all lands will answer to a faith that honors God.

It runs through the New Testament that there is to be an *end* of redemptive work upon the earth and a world, αἰών, of new and different life for our race.

With this *ending* coincides the judgment, or that itself is the finishing up.

It is nevertheless true that in an important sense we live now in the days of the Son of man. Who at the time Christ spake could have imagined that time would be noted, the world over, in years from the birth of Jesus of Nazareth? The Christian era is the "days of the Son of man."

He also promised to be with his disciples to the end of the world. This he can and does fulfill without being visible to our bodily eyes. A great part of the present training of the

Church is to teach us to live in the belief that this promise is constantly fulfilled. Still we must believe that the world to come will be ushered in with a new revelation and presence.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SYMBOLISM OF FIRE IN THE SCRIPTURES.

I INTRODUCE this subject with reference to the nature of future punishment, to be discussed as we advance. That fire when employed of future punishment is used symbolically and not of material flames it is not necessary at the present day to argue, though one does not have to go far back in the history of opinion to find this belief. And in the early days of Christianity it was stoutly held by many. Augustine made it a *sine quâ non*. He says: * "Dum tamen nullo modo illa corpora talia futura esse credamus ut nullis ab igne afficiantur doloribus," *i. e.*, Provided nevertheless that in no way we believe that those bodies will be such as not to be affected by the pain of fire. He falls back upon the omnipotence of God to accomplish the effect of material fire upon spiritual bodies.

It being taken for granted then, that fire is a symbol, when it is said to be employed in any way in the spirit world, the first question is, What does it symbolize? To answer this we need only to recur to its use in the Bible and to the well-known laws of illustrative lan-

* De Civ. Dei, 21, 9.

guage. A symbol is a material sign of a spiritual power or process. Symbolic use must be founded upon preceding natural or non-symbolic use. In the expression of spiritual or metaphysical ideas, language proceeds from that which is natural and familiar to our senses. The process is that of illustrating the obscure or recondite by that which is well known. The purport of a symbol therefore is determined by the original simple meaning and use of the term in the material world. If one seek to carry it beyond this, it becomes no longer an illustration, but a term without fixed significance—a balloon cut from its moorings and lost to knowledge.

The natural power and action of fire as known to our senses is twofold, *i. e.*, upon imperishable objects to refine by purifying from dross, and upon perishable objects, to consume. If these latter are sensitive beings, the destruction is accompanied with pain.

This is the foundation upon which the symbolic use is built; for this is what *we know* of fire and by it we can illustrate what is less known.

The Bible, taking familiar facts, illustrates by fire God's action upon men both in this world and the next. And the use of "fire" in the Bible of God's action *in this life* makes an intervening step by which we ascend more securely to a right idea of its meaning when applied to the future. There is beside in the

Old Testament a ceremonial use of fire which is a farther intermediate basis on which to fix an understanding of its use in spiritual things in the New Testament.

We pass, as not pertinent, the use of fire in Scriptures merely to mark the divine presence, as in the burning bush and on Sinai.

The displeasure of God and his judgment in this life are very often compared to the work of fire, as Ps. xc: 3: "A fire goeth before him and burneth up his adversaries round about." Isa. ix: 19: "Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land burnt up, the people also are as the fuel of fire." Isa. xxx: 27: "Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke; his lips are full of indignation and his tongue is as a devouring fire." I need not multiply citations. With these passages we naturally associate in the New Testament Heb. xii: 29, "For our God is a consuming fire." Of fire as a purifier illustrating God's action in this world, the familiar passage in Malachi (iii: 1-3) gives an example: "For he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi," etc. This figure is frequent in the prophets.

The ceremonial use of fire in the Jewish ritual included both its destructive and its cleansing power. The burnt offerings were consumed by fire; the waste of the victims was

consumed by fire, and the ceremonial cleansing of things that "abide the fire" was by fire, as in Num. xxxi: 23: "Everything that may abide the fire, ye shall make to go through the fire, and it shall be clean."

"Furnace" is used both of God's destructive and his purifying work among men. For the former see Isa. xxxi: 9, "The Lord whose fire is in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem." For the latter see Eze. xx: 18-22, "As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you, and (v. 15) will consume thy filthiness out of thee."

Two passages in Isaiah require special notice from the way in which they are associated with the language of Christ in the New Testament. Indeed these verses in the last chapter of Isaiah are probably the basis of Christ's use of fire as a symbol of punishment. In Isa. xxxiii: 14 we read, "The sinners in Zion are afraid, trembling hath surprised the godless ones. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings." "Fire" and "burnings" are here used with reference to their consuming power, and to the *certainty* that none could abide through *everlasting* burnings. If this is not plain from the verse itself, the twelfth verse makes it so: "As thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire."

The other passage is the last half of the last chapter of Isaiah. Here we have a final prophetic vision of the exaltation and glory of Jerusalem. The Jews are to be gathered home and all the godly among the Gentiles with them. "All flesh" shall worship there from Sabbath to Sabbath. This of course is a symbolic picture. The picture includes the Lord's indignation toward his enemies and their destruction by fire. This destruction is conceived as wrought in the neighborhood of Jerusalem so that to the assembled saints mementoes of it are visible in the dead bodies of the transgressors.

And here fire is introduced a second time, not as smiting living victims but as consuming these bodies as offal according to the actual custom in the valley of Hinnom at one period in the history of Jerusalem; a fire, not allowed to "be quenched," being maintained for the immediate consumption of the waste of the city. The association of the "worm" with the fire is of itself sufficient evidence that entire destruction and nothing more is signified. For in the accumulation of animal offal, if the fire failed to reach all, the worm was sure to be present, and certainly, though more slowly, finish the work. The perpetual presence of the fire and the worm, if it has any significance beyond the *perfect consumption* of the "carcases," may well be taken as a symbol of God's unchangeable and eternal purpose to put

away from his kingdom "everything that doth offend," whether such offence has arisen in the past or shall ever in the future arise in his universe.

We note at this point then, that there is no use of the word fire upon which to base a symbolic use as significant of anything but destruction or purification. There is nothing from which to derive a symbol of mere punitive suffering without either destruction or purification. And if Jesus Christ and the writers of the New Testament based their use of "fire," in speaking of the future life, upon what was already familiar to the Jewish people in their own scriptures, we are shut up to the choice of understanding them to mean by it either a means of destruction or of cleansing.

But to go on and look at the use of "fire" in the New Testament.

I leave one side at first all passages referring directly to future punishment, and as before, look at the natural agent in other relations upon which the symbolic use may rest.

John the Baptist, in describing the work of Christ, refers to the consuming power of fire, Matt. iii: 10: "Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. But (v. 12) he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Christ himself took up the same language, Matt. vii: 19, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into

the fire." In Mk. ix: 49, he seems to refer to the alternative power of fire to consume the perishable, or refine the imperishable, "For every one shall be *salted* with *fire*." In Matt. xiii: 40, he approaches the subject of future punishment by referring to the destructive power of fire: "As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, *so* shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." Paul, in I. Cor. iii: 12, 15, cites both the destructive and the purifying power of fire: "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is; if any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward; if any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

These are the principal passages in the New Testament which form an introduction to the figurative use of "fire" in respect to the future.

Like the scripture cited from the Old Testament they lead us to understand "fire" in connection with punishment in the spirit world, as typifying either destruction or purification. Between these two ideas we must be govern-

ed by the preponderance of evidence. This I shall endeavor to present as we go on.

But it may be necessary to raise the question whether the use of the adjectives "unquenchable" and "eternal" does not change the significance of "fire" when used of future punishment. These words strike the imagination so as to seem to many perhaps to introduce new elements.

This possibly is not an unnatural error, but nevertheless it is an error. These terms signify the intensity and persistence of the agent to which they are applied, but do not alter the essential force, natural or metaphorical, of the agent itself. An unquenchable fire is one that cannot be put out so as to save any of the material which is burning. But no one understands, when it is applied to a natural fire, that the fire burns after the material is consumed. Hence there is no ground on which rest any other idea of a figurative fire of which the same word is used, than that of entire destruction by a process that cannot be checked.

We have an example of the use of "unquenchable" in connection with natural fire in Eusebius.* He twice uses the phrase unquenchable fire (puri asbestō) of the burning of certain martyrs. Crusé renders it "immense fire." The impression of the narrative is that an unusually large fire was made in

* Eccl. Hist., B. vi. ch. 41.

these instances, that the mob of Alexandria made a kind of bonfire over the sufferers.

The language of course is that of emphasis, but no one would ever think of anything unnatural or miraculous about the fire.

When therefore the word is used of a fire which God is represented as kindling for a purpose the emphasis is that of the certainty that His purpose will be accomplished. Surely the language finds sufficient scope here.

When eternal (aiōnios) is employed we have emphasis of a different kind, but still it is emphasis. And emphasis cannot change the nature of a symbol. A fire that burns always will be ever ready to consume all that is cast into it. But this does not imply that the nature and operation of the fire will be unlike that of fire that lasts but for a time. Fuel is not eternal. Did any one ever suppose that the perpetual vestal fire at old Rome was kept alive by unconsumable fuel? If so there would have been small need of the relay of virgins to watch it day and night.

Here again the force added to the symbol comes from the *purpose of Him who kindles the fire. The eternity is in God, not in his creature of a day. The eternal fire is his unchangeable will to destroy and put away finally from his universe all that cannot be brought to holiness and happiness.* This determination must relate not only to the past of our world, but to all worlds, mayhap to those not yet

created. Hence the eternity of the fire. Why should we imagine anything else inconsistent with the laws of speech, the dictates of reason, and the revealed mercy of God? But it may be said that the fire of future punishment is not represented as fire sustained by fuel at all. That ideas of fuel and consumption have nothing to do with it. I reply, Then the language means nothing at all. Our only way of getting at the meaning of the higher uses of language is by what we know first in the world of sense. Sensible images are seized upon because we know so well what they do mean; and we need not be afraid to trust our knowledge. God expects us to trust it.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, though it does not contain the word "fire," yet requires a few words in this connection. The word "flame" is used in it by our Lord, and this has caused the parable to stand in many minds as great and decisive evidence that future punishment is to be by pains as of those in a non-consuming fire. I do not hesitate to admit that "flame" here is the symbol of pain, and not of destruction. In this it is an exception to the manner in which "fire" is used. It becomes so by the express mention of the pain-causing quality of flame: "I am in anguish in this flame." But if the rich man had simply been pictured as in the flames, and attention not been limited to the pain, the metaphor would certainly have signified destruction.

But this parable in reality does not touch the final punishment of the wicked at all. It is not a picture of Gehenna. Its scene is laid immediately after death and before the judgment. Christ never represents any one as cast into Gehenna before the judgment. The pains of the rich man were of remorse, and anticipatory of condemnation to a fate still in the future. The time for his destruction had not yet come, and he is not represented as enduring the final fate of the wicked. His condition is rather that given in II. Peter ii: 9: "The Lord knoweth how . . . to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment."

There are two passages in the Revelation* also, in which the pain-causing power of fire, associated with its destructive power, is made the basis of its symbolic use. But in these cases also it is by express mention that the force of the symbol is turned in that direction. The victims are said *to be tormented* with the fire. But the idea of destruction is not excluded, for the reason that we have in this part of the book a succession of panoramic vision-pictures, and when the actual execution occurs of what is hypothetically threatened in chapter xiv: 10, the representation is that at least all the *human beings* involved are *destroyed.* This is in chapter xix: 19-21: "And the rest *were killed* with the sword of him that sat upon the

* xiv: 10 and xx: 10.

horse." The ideal beings, "the Beast and False Prophet, they twain were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone." But it should be kept in mind that we do not have here a specific representation of the punishment after the judgment day in Gehenna, if indeed it has any reference to it at all. These visions, until we come to the close, have apparent reference to the great conflicts of truth and error in the progress of the world. And the whole matter is idealized. The great powers of evil and error are idealized. The Beast, the False Prophet, the great Harlot, who are they? Certainly not individual beings of any order, but systems of error personified to make a picture. But these beings, with the devil, are said to be tormented unto ages of ages (margin of revised version). But this idealization is not confined to them. It is also said of those who worship the beast and his image that the smoke of their torment goeth up unto ages of ages. But these victims are also ideals. The opponents of Christianity have not actually worshipped a beast nor an image of a beast nor have had their foreheads or hands branded. These are merely ideal representatives of the adherents of the systems of evil and error, not human sinners A, B and C, in their individual relations to God. What then? The threatened infliction is to be taken in the same ideal representative sense.

The whole method is that of the absolute, that of ideal intensity, in order to emphasize the displeasure of God against evil and his purpose to overwhelm it in the administration of the kingdom of his Son. This method requires that typical powers and beings arrayed against it should have their doom portrayed in the most intense language possible. Speech is exhausted to picture the terribleness of their fate, which is not simple destruction, but the most prolonged suffering, without however excluding the idea of extinction at the end. But we are not to take this language and apply it to the fate of individual sinners in any cold literalness, any more than in the closing vision of the chapter we are to take as a literal punishment and as an exhibition of the character of God, the wine press of the wrath of God and the blood gushing out a torrent up to the horses' bridles for two hundred miles. The apocalyptic style is to exhaust the possibilities of language in representing absolute and universal ideas, such as holiness, iniquity and the divine abhorrence of sin. But in framing doctrines such language should be carefully distinguished from the plain instruction of our Lord regarding the destiny of the individual sinner.

Also it should not be quite forgotten that the early Christian fathers were not agreed, nor indeed have the fathers of any subsequent

age been agreed, to regard the Revelation as the work of the apostle John. There are many marks that seem to stamp it as an early prophetic writing, indeed inspired and profitable, but not a part of the apostolic gospel.

CHAPTER XIII.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

It was a favorite remark of the late Dr. N. W. Taylor, that the interpretation of language was a balancing of probabilities. Students of language will certainly not fail to recognize the truth in the saying. Especially must it be true of that which is spoken but once for the ages, and becomes therefore addressed to the greatest variety of intelligence in most diversified conditions.

It is not strange then, nor to be regretted, that in the explanation of the scriptures every generation insists upon holding the scales anew for itself. It must be so to the end of time, and those who see in it only instability forget that there is a stability of motion as well as of rest; indeed the stability of the universe is the stability of motion.

Many express regrets that not a few Christians at the present day are disposed to revise their opinions upon the divine judgments so as to set aside some of the ideas of terror and torture that have prevailed under the impression apparently that it was impossible to misrepresent by exaggeration the severity of God

against sinners. But the fact remains that the number is increasing who believe that in interpreting the threatenings of God men have mingled ideas born, not of the Spirit of God but of the cruelty of man's animal nature.

The point of view of every generation is its own enlightenment, culture and prevailing ideas. It cannot do otherwise than look upon what has been spoken to the ages from this point. The world, as a whole of humanity, does not repeat itself, but under the administration of redemption is moving onward as in a vast orbit for a single circuit. Such an orbit gives the same view, and yet ever different.

We must take the view which our place and time give us.

"But the times are degenerate," some will say; "and its ideas wrong."

Let us see.

Were the times of the Christian Fathers or of the Reformers better than ours for discerning that which relates to all time?

Latin Christianity, as a system of thought, began with Tertullian. And what was the development of human nature in the Roman world of the second century?

For generations the favorite amusement of the people of the large cities had been to gather in vast amphitheaters, in uncounted thousands, to witness gladiatorial fights or the execution of convicts, including Christian martyrs, by wild beasts. Such had been the

Roman school of thought. In this atmosphere stifling with cruelty were men's minds likely to be clear and calm to interpret penalty and pain for all succeeding generations? Or take the time of Augustine, who was a tower of strength for centuries but who has in some matters cast a chilling shadow upon later times. He wrote under the dominating ideas of Roman imperialism, wrote when the horrors of pagan persecutions were still a local and household remembrance, wrote, moreover, when all the world to him, state and church alike, was crumbling as at the day of doom under the blows of the invading hosts of barbarians.

Let us imagine ourselves carried back to those days, and having known no other; should we be in a better position than we are to-day to fully enter into the words of him who spake not for one age, but with a perfect prevision of the end from the beginning. Should we be in a better condition to understand the forces which were in all time to operate for the regeneration of society? The world was fast approaching the time when the great Gregory wrote: "We see nothing but sorrow. We hear nothing but complaints. Ah Rome! once mistress of the world. Where is the senate? Where the people? The buildings are in ruins, the walls are falling. Everywhere the sword! Everywhere death! I am weary of life." But to

show how greatly men's views are affected by current events, another century passes, and, as if a new world had been born, the Venerable Bede breaks out at the close of his history: "In whose (Christ's) kingdom let the earth exult and in a joyous faith in him Britannia rejoice, and let the many islands be glad and confess the memory of his holiness."

Or take the times of Anselm and Bernard. Did they have better opportunities to understand the divine love and mercy, and the language of the Prince of Peace? Theirs were times when wars, national, feudal and private, were constant features of society, and war a business of a large class even of those who claimed the name of Christ. They were the times of William the Norman and Guy of Burgundy. Let a man come to this question of the fitness of those times to interpret for other times the gospel of Jesus Christ from reading, *e. g.*, Mr. Freeman's account of the battle of Hastings.

Or compare an age that could institute or tolerate the inquisition with the present, which sends around agents of humane societies to put out of pain sick and lame horses, and legislates against cruelty to cats and dogs!

And what has brought about this change? Has anything else had a tithe as much to do with it as the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of men? And has this Spirit made them less

capable of reading aright his words, which were meant for all time, but which need to be spiritually discerned? Has not Christ rather brought us up to a height where we can see him more as he truly is and always was? —where we can read his words in the light of his own power and work in redeeming the world? These are times when our hearts are mercifully shielded from many things that have tended to embitter and warp the judgment of men of other ages.

The reformers did great and glorious work, but they were called upon to wrestle with vast abuses and aberrations from the truth. Their work was to block out by large new paths for thought and action, but they were not in a position to catch all the lights and shadows of God's truth. No, these are not degenerate times. No, let us gratefully appreciate the light of to-day, and devoutly looking to Christ read anew what he has said of the future punishment of sinners.

That a righteous retribution awaits the finally impenitent is one of the prominent features of the revelation Christ made to men. The Old Testament, as we have seen, makes known a death of the wicked, but gives scarcely any glimpse of details that can appeal to human sensibilities.

But with the light of life in the gospel of Christ come more distinct warnings to those

who shall reject this light. Christ, and also the apostolic writers, taught that there shall be a future punishment of the wicked, as plainly as they taught anything, and we must believe that this will be inflicted at the last judgment upon some, unless we admit the idea, as I certainly cannot, that the mere threatenings themselves of penalty will be sufficient in some realm of grace preceding the judgment to reclaim all to penitence.

For the Lord to reveal a punishment dramatically which he knew never would become actual for any, seems to me entirely unworthy of God; and, beside, seems to exalt the motive of fear into a means of grace and a power of which we know nothing, in this life at least. I am compelled by every consideration of reason to believe that when Christ says "these shall go away into eternal punishment," that the time is coming when such a penalty will be experienced by some.

But it is not my object to dwell upon the certainty of future punishment, but to inquire as to its nature. The New Testament makes known a punishment of sinners both before and after the general judgment. These are not the same. There are given us glimpses of a state of pain between death and the judgment.

This seems to consist largely of anticipation of the doom to come. And remorse can do its work at any time upon a soul cut off from diverting engagements. The rich man in

anguish in Hades is an example of this earlier punishment.

The words of II. Pet. ii: 9 (revised version) seem to indicate a similar condition. The original word for punish here is of the same root as that which Christ uses for the final penalty. The idea of the writer is based upon what he also affirms or refers to (v. 4) that the evil angels have been committed to pits of darkness and *reserved* unto judgment.

Whether this ante-judgment pain can ever have a reformatory effect we are not informed, but no encouragement is anywhere held out to men to enter upon it with hope.

Of this preliminary punitive state little is said, for, of necessity it falls into the shadow of the great final consummation of punishment.

This last award is represented under various forms, mostly in symbols designed to impress the imagination with its certainty and dreadfulness, that the attention of men may be arrested and that they be deterred from carelessly braving it. This is far from saying, however, that it is impossible to exaggerate, in interpretation, its dreadfulness. The word of Christ, in its simplicity and first necessary meaning, is dreadful enough. To approach the subject with the presumption that the punishment of a being finite in his capacities is to be made infinite in duration is to do violence to everything but the hardihood of

the human imagination. An excessively severe style of interpretation may not have done the harm in a rude and violent age, which it must in a cultured and humane one by causing a revulsion against the authority of the word so interpreted. In a rude age men do not stop to think much what their words mean beyond the expression of present feeling.

In interpreting the various symbols employed we must look for their harmony. Their truth and pertinence must lie in what they express in common. Thus when destruction is said to be both by eating worms and burning fire, it must not be conceived that worms can eat in fire. And when it is declared both that men shall be cast into outer darkness and into fire, it must not be supposed that flames would not dispel darkness. Yet all these figures are used to describe the one fate of the wicked.

We must therefore search for what they have in common as the real ideas intended. These ideas we understand to be *banishment from God and a painful destruction.* As I have said, probably no other thought would ever have entered into biblical interpretation had it not been for the idea that the life of the soul must necessarily be indestructible, and for the images of endless torture that the cruelty of pagan imaginations handed down to the Christian ages. If any one is fixed unchangea-

bly in the opinion that men cannot lose their conscious sensitive existence, he will understand the scripture language of punishment as this opinion compels him.

But he will utterly disregard, in so doing, the authority of this scripture as a source of light on the precedent question of man's future continuance in being. Of this I have already spoken.

Christ and the apostolic writers make *destruction* to be the penalty inflicted upon impenitent sinners after the judgment; and as it is complete, a death without a resurrection or restoration, it is necessarily *eternal.* The pain of this death is to be measured by justice in the hand of Him who inflicts it. This Christ himself reveals in what he says of the few and many stripes. And let me say just here that no conception of punishment which makes its pain to be of infinite duration is consistent with these words of Christ. The finite, however small, multiplied by the infinite becomes infinite. And the infinite in pain cannot be called "few stripes" except in violence to language and reason.

In looking for the teaching of Christ in the record of Matthew, we find, first, that John the Baptist preached repentance and warned to flee from the wrath to come on the ground that the coming Christ should be the great destroyer of the ungodly (iii: 12). "He will gather his wheat into his garner but the chaff

he will burn up with unquenchable fire." Then Christ himself adopts this language with great explicitness in the thirteenth chapter. First, in the parable of the wheat and the tares, he illustrates how it shall be in the kingdom of heaven, at the harvest: "I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." On leaving the multitudes, his disciples asked for an explanation. It may well have been these fearful words that chiefly disturbed their minds, the rest seems plain enough. Christ's answer (vs. 26-43) is one of his most remarkable utterances for directness and completeness. It was his inmost thought given to his chosen circle. In it he unfolds with great particularity what he designed to teach of the destruction of the wicked at the end of the world: "As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, *so shall it be* in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." If it was possible for Christ to give a picture of a painful and complete extinguishment of personal life and being, he did it in these words. If tares are consumed in the fire that destroys them *so are the wicked.* Hence I say that such a revelation from Christ is the highest authority

on the antecedent question of the immortality of the resurrection life of the wicked. It is subject to destruction in the "consuming fire" of God, even as the grass of the field.

The other passages in which Christ speaks of the Gehenna of fire and of the broad way that leadeth into destruction are to be taken in like manner. Taken together they are an awful vision of the end of the sinner, but it is of his *end*.

Here is where it will be objected that the traditional view rests, and rests securely upon the representation by Christ that this fire of Gehenna is eternal. It will be said that there could be no need of an eternal fire simply to destroy the sinners of one world. But this idea betrays the fact that the mind is not yet free from the impressions that arise from contemplating the fire of God as material flame. But as the fire is a symbol of the *divine purpose and work*, to be executed only in a way known to Him who can both create and destroy, so any adjective of duration should be understood as marking the permanence of that purpose and work. I have indicated in part what I hold to be the truth in this matter in a preceding chapter. In the further examination of the Greek word for eternal, aionios, I refer to the twenty-fifth chapter of Matt., where it is used both of fire and punishment.

This adjective from the noun aiōn, the abstract term for duration, means *enduring*. Its

use with any substantive signifies that duration is to be understood as entering into that substantive conception to the fullest extent of which it is capable. *But the idea of duration must be subsordinate to the essential idea of the substantive itself,* and not be held to alter that essential idea. Thus when applied to the absolute and the infinite, as the Deity and his necessary activity, it gives us the idea of duration without limit, but when applied to things which in themselves have limits, it can only signify duration to the reaching of those limits—all the duration the given objects or entities are capable of. Thus when used of destroying agents, and processes universally known to be terminable, the mind merely conceives a continuance to an inevitable and complete end. When used of a result it means permanent. Thus, judicially, of "punishment" it shuts off the possibility of reprieve and restoration. These shall go away into eternal punishment, an absolutely *enduring punishment.*

Perhaps no other form of words could have cut off so effectually the hope of reprieve, the idea that the punishment of the future is to be temporary and purgative, that the pit of Gehenna holds a purifying fire, especially as it is so easy for us to fancy that we have an indestructible nature. Given this idea, and the undeniable symbolism of fire as a purifier of essences that "abide the fire," and, without

such decisive words as these the doctrine of a future restoration would perhaps be unassailable.

But the words an eternal punishment tell nothing of what the punishment is. Their place in the verse in which they occur contrasts it with life. It is in some way the opposite of life. But the 41st verse gives us the great symbol of destruction as marking what the punishment is, and *how* it is opposed to life. To suppose that it is *living in the fire* is, we must believe, the cruel or unfortunate imagination of man, and not the thought of Jesus.

To make an argument to prove that punishment must be punish*ing* in the sense of the conscious enduring of punishment, is to show a determination to accept only the greatest possible severity of language in the direction of pain, as the most probable dealing of God with his sinful creatures, of God whose name is Love, and who delights in mercy. And this dealing is after all hope of good from them is past. If "the interpretation of language is the balancing of probabilities;" if another understanding is at least possible, will men persist in choosing that which violates all that is best in ourselves and all that we know otherwise of God? Two interpretations being possible, we are bound to prefer that which harmonizes most readily with reason, mercy and the analogies of nature. Why should the tree bloom with millions of blossoms and perfect only

hundreds of its fruit? Why should the windfalls be allowed to sink into the bosom of mother earth but the sentient being that is lost to good not be allowed also to become lost to feeling?

As the article is wanting in the Greek, "for eternal punishment" read *an eternal punishment.* Any punishment which is eternal answers the demand of the language so far as duration goes.

I have said that adding "eternal" to the symbol of destruction should be taken to signify God's abiding purpose for his universe to put away all that offends, as the final result of his moral administration.

We know not how often in yet unborn worlds and ages he may have to execute this purpose. But we are assured that the purpose *abides.* There is evidence however in this very verse that the destruction of human sinners is but an instance of this abiding of his purpose *from the past.* Christ says *the fire was prepared* for the devil and his angels. Here is the continuance of the design first formed for others and then applied to our race. To how many other races it may have to be applied God only knows. Astronomy reveals the probability that the various parts of the stellar universe have been at successive periods, or are yet to become the scenes of life similar to our own. And we can hardly suppose that moral character is developed in other worlds, by the one

God and Father, through methods so unlike those of earth as not to involve trial and free choice of good or ill. If so, there may be sinners to be put away from all the various theaters of moral government during countless ages, for the symbol of his will toward remediless evil is eternal. Call this destroying purpose toward evil *the fire of the ages* and you have a good translation of " to pur aionion."

The use of aionios in various connections in the Scriptures established the correctness of interpreting it according to the nature of the object to which it is applied, and shows that it more often represents a finality of result than a continued process. This last appears quite strikingly in its use by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Thus in vi: 2 he speaks of "eternal judgment." No one understands this of an unending process of judging, but of a judgment which is irreversible, which shall be a finality for eternity. So in v: 9 "eternal salvation" is not an eternal process of saving, but a salvation that is assured to abide forever so as not to need to be repeated. And again in ix: 12, "eternal redemption" is a ransom that will never have to be paid again. There is no objection to accepting a proper rendering of aionios in these and like passages because no antecedent theory stands in the way as in the matter of punishment. I give one other example. What in Matt. xii: 31, 32, is said to

be a sin which can never be forgiven, in Mark iii: 29 is called "an eternal sin;" and, as if to guard against the possibility of this being taken as eternal *sinning,* Mark uses the concrete individual form for the word sin, hamarteema, not hamartiá. It is a curious fact too that taking the whole Bible in Greek, *i. e.,* the Old Testament in the LXX, the word aionios is used oftener in Leviticus than any other book; used of ordinances, landmarks, covenants, etc. And we know what kind of eternity was intended thereby.

But the phrase aionion, fire, is once used in the New Testament of an event upon this earth, Jude v. 7; and moreover it is there said to be *an example.** It was the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them. They were destroyed by *an "eternal fire."* If any one doubts it let him look for their *sites and count the chances of rebuilding,* especially if the waters of the Mediterranean are to be let into the Jordan valley according to the recommendation of certain engineers. I do not care to rest my argument particularly on this passage, yet in some respects it comes very near what scientists call crucial. II. Peter ii: 6 also cites Sodom and Gomorrah as an "example" of the fate of the ungodly. It is noteworthy too that Jude in the verse preceding the one quoted uses aidios, a stronger word

* See Meyer in loc.

than aionios, of a period with a *definite termination.* As to the teaching of the apostolic writers, I have perhaps sufficiently unfolded it in the chapters on "Life" and "Death," and with this reference to them will leave the matter.

The doctrine of the New Testament I find to be one and harmonious, viz., a final punishment of sinners after the judgment by a death of the soul-man, the second death, a cessation of consciousness and personality, the natural antithesis of eternal life.

CHAPTER XIV.

OPINIONS OF SOME EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

To go far into the history of the views I have advocated would take me beyond my designed limits. It will suffice to show what thoughts were working in a few representative minds before the Roman or Augustinian period, and then how other views came to prevail. But first let me mention that Olshausen, in his Opuscula Theologica, and after him, Laidlaw, in his Bible Doctrine of Man, has sought to turn aside the force of the testimony of the Greek Fathers, I shall quote, by attributing to them a peculiar view of the relation of soul and spirit—a trichotomy of man—which would lead them to use the word death in an unusual sense. What these writers say is true of some of the fathers, but not of those with whom we are chiefly concerned. It is true of the erratic Tatian, who was an Oriental and finally a gnostic leader. It is true of Origen, but not true of Justin Martyr and others I shall cite. When Olshausen with a stroke of his pen sweeps in Justin and Theophilus of Antioch he does what is about on a par with classing Bishop Butler with George Fox in English religious history.

The fathers before Origen all in a general way accept eternal punishment; and it is noticeable how those to whom the Greek was a native tongue and the language of literature loyally repeat the words of Christ and seem in an unquestioning way, most of them, to think of nothing but material fire. The fear of the eternal fire is a motive they often refer to. But when the most thoughtful among them begin to inquire into the subject philosophically, they show that they could think to the bottom of a question as well as we, and certainly knew as well as we what meaning Greek words were designed to convey.

As evidence of what the early speculations were we have the writings of men well known to the Church, and compositions of uncertain authorship, *e. g.*, Hermas and the Clementina. First among the former is Justin Martyr, who wrote Greek in a way that reminds you of Plato himself. He distinctly considers the question of the soul's losing its animating principle, and affirms the belief that under punishment it will finally lose it.

He speaks by the interlocutor of the dialogue with Trypho thus: "But I do not say indeed that all souls die" (*i. e.*, with the body), "for that were truly a piece of good fortune to the evil. What then? The souls of the pious remain in a better place, while those of the unjust and wicked are in a worse, waiting for the time of judgment. Thus some who have ap-

peared worthy of God never die, but others are punished *so long as God wills them to exist* and to be punished." Chap. v.

He goes on in a succeeding section, making his speaker criticise the views of Plato and others thus:

"I care not for Plato nor Pythagoras, nor in short for any one who thinks thus. For you can learn the truth as it is, in this way: The soul either is itself life or it has life. If now it is life it would animate something else not itself, as also motion would move something other than itself. But that the soul lives no one would deny. But if it lives it lives not as being life, but as partaking in life, and that which shares in anything is something different from that in which it shares. But the soul shares in life, since God wished it to live. So also, therefore, it will not share in life at such time as God shall not wish it to live. For living does not belong to it of its own nature, as to God."

"But as a man is not forever, and the body is not forever united to the soul, but when the union is broken, the soul leaves the body and the man no longer is, thus also when it is necessary that the soul should no longer be, the animating spirit departs from it, and the soul no longer is, but it also goes thither again whence it came." Chap. vi.

In agreement with this in the seventh chapter of the second apology he speaks of the

"destruction of the whole world by which the wicked angels and demons and men shall no longer exist (Meeketi ōsi)," and yet in the same chapter he says that the race of angels and of men will justly suffer in aeonian fire the punishment of whatever sins they have committed. This shows how he discriminated between eternal fire and the eternal suffering of the same individuals in fire. Nothing can be plainer than the meaning of the writer in these passages, and better had it been if Justin's Greek common sense had prevailed in the realm of speculation. Many are to-day returning to it.

The epistle to Diagnetus, which has been attributed to Justin, contains a similar sentiment in chap. x., where the author speaks of the "eternal fire which shall afflict *even to the end* those that are committed to it."

Theophilus of Antioch (lib. ii; c. 27) says: "But then some one will say to us, Was man made mortal by nature? By no means. How then, immortal? Neither do we say this. But some one will say, Was he then made a nothing? Neither do we say this. By nature then he was made neither mortal nor immortal. For if he had made him immortal from the beginning he had made him a God. Again if he had made him mortal, God would have seemed to be the cause of his death. Therefore neither immortal made he him, nor indeed mortal, but, as we have said before, capable of both, in order that if he should incline

to the immortal by keeping the commands of God he should receive as a reward from him immortality and become God; but if he should turn back to the things of death in disobedience to God he should himself become to himself the cause of death. For God made man free and master of himself. What therefore he brought upon himself by neglect and disobedience this God now remits to him as a free gift through his own love for man and compassion when man is obedient to him. For as man disobeying drew death upon himself, so obeying the will of God he, who desires, can purchase for himself eternal life. For God has given to us a law and holy commandment by obeying which every one is able to be saved and, obtaining the resurrection, to inherit incorruption." The phrase in this passage, "As we have said before," seems to refer to chap. 24, where he says of man in paradise: God giving him an opportunity of advancement, that increasing and becoming perfect and being shown to be even a God, he might thus ascend also to heaven, for man was made of a middle nature, neither wholly mortal nor wholly immortal, but capable of both."

Some will see in these passages only reference to the death of the body and the resurrection. But Theophilus was a contemporary of Justin, and it seems most probable that he held similar views.

Irenæus expresses himself variously on the

subject of punishment, in a way that shows that his ideas were for the most part negative, and that he had not thought out carefully the meaning and the harmony of the passages of scripture he quotes. Thus at one time he speaks of the wicked as having an abode in darkness; again, as in a self-inflicted blindness, then as punished by eternal fire, and also as separated from all good.* He thus expresses himself homiletically. But as to the final result of punishment he seems to hold with Justin; for in connection with an apparent quotation from Justin as to the soul having a life of its own, he says, lib. ii; cap. 34:

"It is the Father of all who imparts continuance forever and ever on those who are saved. For life does not arise from us, nor from our own nature, but it is bestowed according to the grace of God, and therefore he who shall preserve the life bestowed upon him and give thanks to him who imparted it shall receive also length of days forever and ever. But he who shall reject it and prove himself ungrateful to his Maker, inasmuch as he has been created, and has not recognized him who bestowed, deprives himself of continuance forever and ever." "And for this reason the law declared to those who showed themselves ungrateful toward him: 'If ye have not been faithful in that which is little, who will give you

* *e. g.*, Against heresies, bk. v; cap. 27.

that which is great?' indicating that those who in this brief temporal life have shown themselves ungrateful to him who bestowed, shall justly not receive from him length of days forever and ever."

Elsewhere in harmony with this he says: "By their continuing in being throughout a long course of ages, they shall receive a faculty of the Uncreated, through the gratuitous bestowal of eternal existence upon them by God. * * *

"But being in subjection to God is continuance in immortality," * * * "The beholding of God is productive of immortality," lib. iv, cap. 38, 3.

When we come to Clement of Alexandria, we are first of all reminded of our regret at the loss of his work, *On the Soul;* for reputed extracts from him are squarely contradictory. Thus a fragment from the Latin of Cassiodorus reads: "Hence it appears that the soul is not naturally immortal, but is made immortal by the grace of God through faith and righteousness and by knowledge." But a fragment from what is called the Barocc. MS. makes him say: "All souls are immortal, even those of the wicked, for whom it were better that they were deathless. For punished with the endless vengeance of quenchless fire, and not dying, it is impossible for them to have a period put to their misery."

But when we look through the complete

works of Clement that have survived, we find that his references to the subject harmonize with the first rather than second fragment, which suggests the possibility that later writers, after the reaction in the West against Alexandrianism, threw their own color upon what they professed to transmit.

In Clement's Exhortation to the Heathen he says, chap. ix :

"For great is the grace of his promise : 'If to-day we hear his voice.' And that 'to-day' is lengthened out day by day, while it is called to-day. And *to the end* the 'to-day' and the *instruction* continue, and then the true 'to-day,' the never-ending day of God, extends over eternity."

In chap. xii he makes Christ say: "For I want to impart to you this grace bestowing on you the *perfect boon of immortality*. . . . . I desire to restore you according to the original model that ye may become also like me. I anoint you with the *unguent of faith* by which you throw off corruption and show the naked form of righteousness by which you ascend to God". . . . "Let us haste, let us run, let us take his yoke, let us receive, *to conduct us to immortality*, the good charioteer of men. Let us love Christ. He led the colt with its parent, and having yoked the team of humanity to God directs his chariot *to immortality*, hastening clearly to fulfil by driving now into heaven what he shadowed forth by riding into Jerusalem."

In the stromata: "So that when one falls into any incurable evil—when taken possession of, for example by wrong or covetousness—it will be for his good if *he is put to death;* for the law is beneficent, being able to make some righteous from unrighteous, if they will only give ear to it, and *by releasing others from present evils;* for those who have chosen to live temperately and justly—*it conducts to immortality,*" lib. ii, chap. 27. Again: "Such is the discipline of wisdom, causing pain in order to produce understanding and restoring to peace *and immortality,*" lib. ii, chap. 2.

Again: "And he who in the body has devoted himself to a good life is being sent on to the *state of immortality,*" lib. iv, chap. 4.

Again: "And the keeping of them (the commandments) is the establishment of them, from *which immortality results.* If then *the love of knowledge produces immortality* and leads the kingly man near to God the King, knowledge ought to be sought till it is found," lib. vi, chap. 15. Now turn back to the first fragment cited and observe how naturally it follows these passages, and how much more the other fragment sounds like Tertullian and Augustine.

One Latin writer, at least, of the second century seems to have agreed with the Greeks.

Arnobius says: "This I say is man's real death, when souls which know not God shall be consumed in long protracted torments with

raging fire;" ii: 14, and: "But if men either knew themselves thoroughly or had the slightest knowledge of God, they would never claim as their own a divine immortal nature, ii: 19.

Ignatius to Polycarp says: "Be sober as an athlete of God, the prize set before thee *is immortality* and eternal life," chap. ii.

"But the gospel is the completion of immortality."* To Philippians, 9.

When we come to the writings of doubtful authorship referred to above, we no longer have the authority of great names, but still we have evidence of what ideas were current at the time.

First among these is the recently recovered "Teaching of the twelve Apostles." This is very remarkable for its simple and most beautiful testimony to *Christ as the revealer of immortality.* We find no reliance upon philosophy in these early disciples. They say: "We thank Thee, Holy Father, for the knowledge of faith and immortality *which thou hast made known through Jesus Christ thy child.*" And

* Dr. Lightfoot, in his recent great work on the epistles of Ignatius, says: "The idea of ἀφθαρσία in Ignatius is not merely immortality but moral incorruption as carrying with it immortal life." Vol. ii, p. 121–8.

In one passage Ignatius seems to overlook any resurrection of the wicked. Dr. Lightfoot renders: "It is death to gainsay the gift of God. They must learn to love if they will rise again." Smyr. ch. 7.

for the rest they are content to say, that the way of sin is the "*way of death,*" and that the wicked "*perish.*"

The Shepherd of Hermas was the Pilgrim's Progress of the early Christians, and attained an authority next to that of scripture.

It makes the punishment of sin to be death, and makes it very plain that it uses death in the sense of loss of being and not a state of sin and suffering.

Thus: "Happy are all they that do righteousness, they shall not be destroyed forever," Vis. ii. "These kinds of men are ordained unto death," Sim. vi: 2. "Because that when they had life they rendered themselves liable to death." Sim. vi: 2. "Ruin has some hope of a resurrection, but death has eternal destruction," Sim. vi: 4. "These have utterly lost life," Sim. viii: 8. "These shall be found dry and fruitless in that world and as wood shall be burned up * * * for the sinners shall be burned because they sinned and repented not," Sim. iv: 4.

In the Clementine Homilies we read: "Part being punished with eternal fire shall be consumed. For they cannot endure forever who have been impious against the One God," iii: 6.

"Many perish utterly after punishment," iii: 59.

"If they have not stood in the service He Himself appointed, they come under the charge

of neglect, and shall be utterly quenched with the great punishment," vii: 7. "And so as to the soul, it shall after punishment be destroyed," xvi: 10.

Even Origen, with all his hope of a final restoration of all, was not altogether uninfluenced by this line of thought; for he says in one passage: "For in this way he who is such as his Creator wished him to be, will receive from God power always to exist and to abide forever." De Princip. i: 3, 8.

After this review no one will doubt that the doctrine of personal destruction as the outcome of future punishment was one of the accepted theories in the early Greek Church.

And this testimony of *Greek writers* is sufficient to show that it was from no necessity of the interpretation of the Greek scriptures that opposite opinions prevailed later, and became the doctrine of the church under the lead of Augustine, and other Latin writers.

The reaction which took place against the opinions of the Greek fathers can perhaps be accounted for when we recall Origen and the bitter controversy which sprang up over his opinions in the third and fourth centuries.

Origen was carried on in his speculations to the hope of a universal restoration, as is well known. Still even this aberration does not appear in what was among his latest utterances on the subject of punishment. In Contra

Celsum viii: 39 and 40, he says: "And finally as to the punishments threatened against the ungodly, these will come upon them after they have refused all remedies and have been, as we may say, visited with an incurable malady of sinfulness. Such is our doctrine of punishment, and the inculcation of this doctrine turns many from their sins." In an earlier work, De Principiis, he distinctly brings out the doctrine so often insisted on in recent times that "sin is its own fire for punishment." ii, x; 4–5.

With some exceptions one feels that those who in the darker centuries following sat in judgment upon Origen were like those who condemned Galileo. But the reaction came, in the African-Latin mind, born in great part of the hardness engendered by continued persecution, and of the despair of the last Roman days.

To give an example of what arguments finally overcame the common-sense philosophy of Justin, and such as agreed with him I append some passages from Augustine's City of God: "What then can I adduce to convince those who refuse to believe that human bodies, animated and living, can not only survive death, but also last in the torments of everlasting fires? They will not allow us to refer this simply to the power of the Almighty, but demand that we persuade them by some example * * * If therefore the salamander lives in

the fire, as naturalists have recorded, and if certain mountains in Sicily have been continually on fire from the remotest antiquity until now, and yet remain entire * these are sufficiently convincing examples that everything which burns is not consumed. * * * Who but God, the Creator of all things, has given to the flesh of the peacock its antiseptic property? This property, when I first heard of it, seemed to me incredible; but it happened at Carthage that a bird of this kind was cooked and served up to me, and taking a suitable slice of flesh from its breast I ordered it kept, and when it had been kept as makes any other flesh stinking, it was produced and set before me and emitted no offensive odor; and after it had been laid by for thirty days and more it was still in the same state.

"Who gave to chaff such power to freeze that it preserves snow buried under it, and such power to warm that it ripens green fruit?

"But who can explain the strange properties of fire itself which blackens everything it burns though itself is bright? Then what wonderful properties do we find in charcoal which is so brittle that a slight pressure pulverizes it, and yet is so strong that no moisture rots it. What then enables it to last so long without rotting, though buried in the damp

* Augustine here follows Tertullian. See Apology, chap. 48, at close.

earth, except this same fire which consumes all things?

"Again, let us consider the wonders of lime; for besides growing white in the fire, which makes other things black, it has also a mysterious property of conceiving fire within itself. Itself cold to the touch, it yet has a hidden store of fire which is not at once apparent to our senses, but which, experience teaches us, lies as it were slumbering within it. And it is for this reason called *quick lime*, as if the fire were the invisible soul quickening the visible substance. But the marvelous thing is that this fire is kindled when it is extinguished. For to disengage the hidden fire the lime is drenched with water, and then though it be cold before it becomes hot by that very application which cools what is hot. Yet there is a greater marvel still; for if you treat the lime not with water but with oil, which is as fuel to fire, no amount of oil will heat it.

"We know that the loadstone has wonderful power of attracting iron; when I first saw it I was thunderstruck * * * These and numberless other marvels, let those sceptics who refuse to credit the divine writings, give me, if they can, a rational account of, * * * for they say reason cannot admit that flesh burn and remain unconsumed, suffer without dying." Lib. xxi: sec. 2-4.

What a drop from Justin and Origen to Augustine? If literature furnishes a more

striking proof of the necessity that every age should investigate and illustrate truth for itself, I do not know where to find it. And yet Augustine has been accepted not only as the teacher of ages darker than his own, but of the present.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TIRUMPH OF LIFE.

Death is swallowed up in victory. I. Cor. xv: 54.

And death shall be no more * * * the first things are passed away. Rev. xxi: 4.

That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things of the world below [margin] and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.—Phil. ii: 10-11.

I HAVE placed together these passages of scripture in order to suggest the strongest possible contrast between what I believe to be the truth, and the prevailing doctrine, viz., that instead of there being no more death, in the final future, death becomes established and eternal, having an everlasting life of its own parallel with the true life of the blessed.

Of course it will be claimed that the promised disappearance of death refers only to the body and the resurrection of the just; but many students of the scriptures are beginning to discern that this traditional understanding fails to harmonize the Divine Word. Paul, in the verses quoted, makes his language as strong and comprehensive as possible; and he was no mean master of speech. If words can exclude the conception of a permanent world of sin, his

do it. Every knee is finally to bow to Christ, and bow, not in rebellious rage, when crushed, but to him as its Lord, *to the glory of God the Father.*

There shall be no knee left not bowing in loving obedience.

And this passage is only one of several in Paul's writings that point to this result, e. g. Col. i: 20; Eph. i: 10.

The Bible, interpreted in harmony with this idea, shows death temporarily victorious over the race, in bringing it under the law of spiritual depravity and animal decay, and exhibits the bringing in of the higher spiritual life by the Giver of life, as a new stage or unfolding of life conditioned upon the consent and coöperation of man himself.

That which was distinctively human, being set at first by the Creator in alliance with the animal, failed to develop itself into the spiritual and immortal; and, reverently be it said, God's farther problem was, to see how many he could bring up from this created animal life to a freely chosen spiritual life, that should be beyond the reach of any death.

Thus the work begun in Eden was carried forward in Bethlehem and on Cal-ary. The Triumph of Life is by way of the spirit and The Spirit. It is by a new work of spiritual creation. In Adam man was created into being. In Christ, the second Adam, he is created into immortality. Man's coöperative part

in this new creation is his faith by which he extends his arms toward the spirit. The spirit infuses a new life, and lifts him upon a new plane of being, where he regains the union with God lost by sin on the plane of nature, and becomes "the new man who after God hath been created in righteousness." The new birth thus becomes more than a figure; it is the constant work going on upon hearts everywhere where God reveals himself to men and men give themselves to God.

But those who refuse to lay hold on this new and higher life remain under the law of death and disappear through a just measure of punitive suffering. With this punitive work as God's executioner Death's office is done, and itself disappears. "And Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire." Hades, the unseen world, is to deliver up its contents and then the empty world-walls are to be flung into the lake of fire, and after the judgment-sifting all who are found to have no spark of spiritual life are to be cast in after them. "This is the second death, the lake of fire." This death of Hades must surely mean that there is to be no more separation into seen and unseen worlds, no longer any such division to distress the children of a common Father, and no stage of imperfect or suffering life. And of course if there is to be no more Hades, there will be no Gehenna, which is a part of Hades, the unseen world.

And death is to have its death. It is to be destroyed. But is it a destruction of death to have it passed over into an eternal potency of pain in the souls of sinful beings? Is it destroyed if it is to remain in a living alliance with sin and retain its power to degrade and torment?

This is rather, as I have said, for death itself to become a life. They who have felt themselves compelled to believe in such an issue of any portion of the world have been too ready to exalt the motive of fear and project the cruelty of the human heathen imagination upon the heart of God. There may have been times and men that could imagine nothing better and could interpret the Bible only in accord with their own hard hearts, but those times are past; such men are gone. The light of eighteen centuries of Christianity has caused the belief that redemption can end in such dualism to be well nigh impossible. It is no longer rationally credible. We do not find it in the Bible, only in a mistaken understanding of it. The only alternative to the view I have advocated, that men in the, time to come are likely to entertain, is the triumph of life by universal purification as by fire, and restoration to immortality, against which opinion I have expressed myself with sufficient clearness.

The subjection of death and its victims, those not found in the book of life, to the second death clears the ground for LIFE—clears

the universe of all debris and sign of death, save the symbolism of the lake of fire, which is made to abide, as we have seen, for ages of ages as a witness to God's unchangeable displeasure against sin and the necessity of its utter removal. Whether this witness even will be required to remain present to the consciousness of those confirmed in life God only knows. But sin and suffering having ceased with the sinner and death at last being "abolished" the world becomes the theater of the life which in the words of Paul is "life indeed," I. Tim. vi: 19; the pulses of which shall beat without fear of cessation or weariness, for they shall be of life, *life* and only LIFE. The eternal world becomes the abode of holiness confirmed, of happiness perfected, with their continuance assured. No longer will the question be asked: Is life worth living? Life is a ladder; if it had led up to nothing it would not have been worth climbing, but set up to heaven it becomes worth what it reaches; it is a part of eternal living. And its struggles and pains lose themselves in the joys and glory of eternal life. Numberless men and women of faith can testify that their most solid joy is in feeling themselves in the current of a life whose mighty onward sweep is bearing them to immortality. It is thus that our consciousness of immortality begins.

Why heaven is sold to us only at such a price of pain we cannot now know, but with the

prize in hand we shall probably understand it, and the understanding itself will enhance the reward. The slaves of sin die with their master, "for the end of those things is death."

"But having become servants of righteousness * * * and servants to God we have our fruit unto sanctification and the end eternal life." And in this eternal life God shall be "all in all." As Origen says,* although with a different application: "And when death shall no longer anywhere exist, nor the sting of death, nor any evil at all, then verily God will be 'all in all.'" In that final unfolding will be understood, as it never yet has been, what it is to have been made in the image of God. Then having eyes spiritual "we shall see him as he is and be like him."

With this consummation will begin the pæan of the eternities, THE NEW SONG, the song of the redeemed, a song no longer of hope nor of faith merely, such as we have sung upon the earth, but of assured possession in entering upon the inheritance of our being.

Let me conclude by setting before our eyes some of the views which the Lord and his apostles have given us of that final triumphant life. It is GLORY, for it was "*in bringing many sons unto* GLORY" "that it pleased God to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." We begin at a great re-

* De Princip., iii: 6, 3.

move from anything that can be called glory—begin in ignorance, sin, and pain, but voices within, around and from God above us bid us strive onward and upward. We often find fault with the length and steepness of the way, but we forget what it is to be an eternal being. We can well afford to be content with beginning far off and low down as long as an infinitude of progress and growth is before us. What would be the blessing of an eternity of life if everything was well nigh within the grasp of our knowledge and power here and now?

What the unfolding of glory before us is, we shall only know as we advance "from glory to glory." We are assured that the sufferings of this present time are not to be weighed over against it—shall cease to come into mention or thought when we reach it—that glory of which the "swallowing up of mortality in life" is but the commencement.

Our blessed Lord himself draws the veil in part from this life: "For they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world * * * are equal with the angels and are the sons of God being sons of the resurrection." The angel is the messenger of God going forth from his near presence to do and make known his will. Clothed in the power of the resurrection life, our work shall be its fitting exercise. Our Lord says again: "I will that where I am they also may be with me," and Paul echoes the

word: "So shall we ever be with the Lord." To attain to the society of Jesus the son of God, the divine man, shall be part of the triumph of that life; and as he shall gather all the good about him, they shall be gathered to each other, and whatsoever joy there is in holy companionship shall be the part of the saints that have overcome. But this is not all; through his servant John, the revelator, he has opened to us still higher glory, still nobler offices. "He that overcometh I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, *as I also overcame* and sat down with my Father in his throne." Here is fellowship in triumph and fellowship in exaltation and authority—a seat on the throne of him who sits on the Father's throne. Here we are near to God, here we are "Kings" in God's service. Surely we are given glimpses hereby of the great heights of the far yonder of eternity, not to be reached in a day, not in a first æon, but in ages of ages. At the same time we shall be "Priests" unto God, which must mark a spiritual and intercessory work. Yes, redemptive saving work doubtless awaits us, which shall be the imparting our own triumphant life to countless beings, and mayhap in more worlds than we now gaze upon in the skies of evening above us.

This is the Triumph to which we are brought by the Incarnate Son the Captain of our Salvation.

It is the gift of our Father "who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ," "nay, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Love, life, joy, and service, triumph together. With worship they shall make up the fullness of our being in the Forever and Forever.